

# **Exhibit A**

## Letters in Support of Billy McFarland

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May 1, 2018

Karen Coviello

Avon by the Sea, NJ

Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald  
Daniel Patrick Moynihan- United States Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007-1312

Dear Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald,

My name is Karen Coviello and I am the cousin of Billy McFarland. In this letter, I will highlight the characteristics of my cousin that I believe, in my personal knowledge, would be important to consider during sentencing.

I want to share a story with you that I believe wholly demonstrates the essence of Billy's personality, compassion and motivation. I was visiting Billy in the city and we took a taxi to dinner. He immediately started talking to the driver. While this didn't shock me because Billy is very outgoing, the way he got this guy to open up within minutes was still astonishing to me. The taxi driver shared how he moved here from a different country and needed to drive this taxi until he could save enough money to start his own business. Billy offered business insights, professional advice, and even went so far as to give the taxi driver his card and told the man to reach out to him if there was anything he could do to help. Billy was able to do this in our short taxi ride because he was genuinely engaged and cared about this stranger. That night I learned from my younger cousin to use any resource you have to help those around you achieve their goals.

Billy has many strong qualities. He is smart, straight forward, kind, happy, generous, funny, hardworking and determined. One of his strongest is that he is a believer and he strongly believes in the American dream. He had a dream that he could create a music festival experience that hadn't been done before. Billy didn't want to fail. He was devastated. He disappointed himself, his family, friends and business partners. He's a good person who failed. He would never purposely hurt or disappoint people. He wanted this festival to happen more than anyone else.

From a very young age, Billy had a true entrepreneurial spirit. He decided to explore this passion before most universities, and even society at large, really embraced entrepreneurship in education. This was a disservice to Billy because he left college right before they started having programs for people like him. He missed out on some fundamental skills he needed and it hurt him in the long run. Billy was never given a handout. He comes from a great family. Both of his parents are also entrepreneurs who built their company from the ground up. As his role models, he wanted to live up to their legacy and make them proud by also being a successful entrepreneur. His parents are loving, hardworking and extremely smart who I look up to as role models as well.

Billy is my younger cousin, but I can honestly tell you that I look up to Billy and I have for years. He has an amazing ability to bring people together. He is always there to help me and I know he would give me the shirt off his back if I needed it. I know that he has learned from his mistakes and I am sure he will use

this terrible experience to better himself and his business endeavors in the future. Billy has never been in trouble with the law before and I know that this experience has enlightened him to ways he will adjust his professional undertakings as well as personal choices going forward. He has a big family filled with people like me and his parents who are here to support him and help him as he continues to make reparations to anyone adversely affected by his actions. I ask you to consider leniency during sentencing for all the aforementioned reasons. Billy is incredibly authentic and deserving of another chance, much like he has always given to the people around him.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen Coviello

Eleni McFarland

New York, NY

The Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St  
New York, NY

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am Billy's sister, and I would like to share with you some thoughts about my brother who I love and care about very much.

My brother has always been a source of knowledge, advice, adventure, and protection in my life. I have looked up to him and leaned on him always. I believe he is the smartest person I know. I think his brain has an incredible capacity to absorb knowledge, to create and grow ideas, and to problem solve. Billy has always been a big dreamer, and it has been heartbreaking to see him leap too big and to fall too short. It petrifies me to think that he could be in so much trouble for a mistake he may have made when he was still so young.

All of Billy's business and personal ventures have common themes. They involve exploring new things, creating opportunities for himself and others, and the sharing of knowledge, skills, and experience. He is very generous in these ways. Some various examples of this include:

- He found passion in jiu jitsu in high school. He loved the sport and wanted to bring it to others' lives, so he started a club in our high school where he rallied classmates for lessons and matches. He exposed his friends to the sport and was energized by the interest and excitement of others.

- People often reach out to me asking to contact Billy for advice or career help. I always check in with him and ask if I can share his contact information. He immediately "of course" immediately, every time. I always hear afterward that he was very helpful, responsive, and thoughtful to these friends or acquaintances of mine. He has helped a few of my friends with school projects and others find jobs.

- While Billy loves to share information and teach others what he knows, he is constantly looking to learn from everyone that he can. He goes to meetings and dinners with people that he admires or finds interesting, because these are opportunities to learn and explore. He used to set up networking events within one of his companies that were aimed at connecting people with different skillsets. He believes everyone has something unique and valuable to offer in the world. He encourages everyone to be curious. He constantly offers to introduce me to people that he believes I can learn from, and always wants to create opportunities for me.

- Whenever I ask him for advice, he gives me very thoughtful and decisive responses. I look to him for his opinion and input on many different topics in my life, and he always helps me. If I'm asking him questions about my professional or educational career, he often will speak to other professionals about their opinions as well, so that he may provide me with the best advice possible. I trust his opinion and value it immensely.

- In all of his companies, he loves to train his employees, help them discover their

strengths, and set them up on their future career. He likes to help people forge their own path. I personally know of many people that he has given jobs, trained, and/or helped find jobs at other companies. He takes the time to get to know people and to help them learn and succeed going forward.

These are just some of the many ways Billy is constantly looking out at the world in a boundless way. For the past few years, he has been living a very fast-paced lifestyle filled with more meetings, appointments, brainstorming sessions, and travel than I can imagine. He keeps a dry erase board in his shower so that no idea, whenever he may have it, will be lost. He values hard work, he cares about people, and he is always thinking and dreaming. With so much success up until this point, I saw Billy begin to dream too big, too fast, and too adventurous. I know that he is heartbroken about everything that has occurred over the past year – and that's strictly because he let people down. He respects his employees, his employers, and he even respected his potential festival goers. I know this for a fact. He cared about creating an unforgettable experience, and it is so scary to see that he has landed himself in such a precarious situation.

In addition to valuing how Billy approaches life and treats others, I look up to him as my mentor and my protector. Growing up he taught me about music, sports, computers, driving, etcetera. I call my brother when I'm walking somewhere alone in the middle of the night, and he stays on the phone with me until I'm home or not alone anymore. I go to him when I'm upset or when I need someone to talk to. Even though he chose to forgo college, he has been incredibly supportive of my path which involved years of undergraduate and graduate school. He would check in while I was at school, asking how my classes were going. He asks me about my current job and reminds me to always work hard and to ask questions.

There is so much good to be seen in my brother, and I hope that that is recognized. Considering he approaches every day, conversation, and experience as a learning opportunity, I know that this terrible time in his life is no different. My brother's actions have put him and my family in a constant state of anxiety and fear over the past year. He is living with the enormous consequences of his actions every day, and he is incredibly remorseful. Billy is spending his days working hard to right his wrongs.

I hope that you may keep these things in mind as you consider my brother's future.

Sincerely,  
Eleni McFarland



April 23, 2018

Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY

RE: Billy McFarland Sentencing

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am writing on behalf of my nephew Billy McFarland and the predicament he finds himself in.

In thinking about and reviewing the situation and also knowing my nephew Billy, I am asking the courts leniency on sentencing. Does doing a bad thing make you a bad person? I think we all could shadow things we have done and be embarrassed by some actions, but, was our intent to harm? Was our intent to defraud?

Billy McFarland is not a bad person and I know his intent was only for the good. I believe his intent was to follow through on promises he made to hundreds of people. To deliver what people had paid for. Not a scheme or to steal from people.

In considering his penalty I kindly ask that you consider where his worth would do more good. Sitting in a cell or doing some community good with his enormous talents?

Your Honor...Billy McFarland is not a bad person nor is he a criminal in the truest sense. He did a bad thing that he truly regrets and without a doubt in my mind, will never be repeated.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Chang McFarland



Irene McFarland

Morristown, NJ

The Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am Billy McFarland's mother and there is much that I would like you to know about my son. I hope you will come to see that Billy is a special person with a great deal to offer the world, that he is deeply remorseful for his recent mistakes, that he has become a better version of himself over the past year, and is deserving of a second chance.

There are many adjectives I could use to describe Billy, but I think his most distinguishing qualities are:

- He is kind, caring, and loyal
- He strives for continuous learning and self-improvement
- He is loved by many and has a unique ability to connect with people and bring them together
- He has character
- He is a big thinker - creative, passionate, and exceedingly optimistic - which can be both an asset and a liability
- He wants to make a difference in the world
- He is not as grown-up as he seems

I ask you to please consider the following synopsis of Billy's life in stages. This is the best way I could think to demonstrate who he is as a person, as well as the progression of factors that I believe contributed to the mess he is in today. I also hope to convey how Billy has dealt with and learned from his failure.

*As a child*, Billy was always ahead of the curve. He walked and talked well before the norm, was first to finish his math times tables, could swim in the ocean as a toddler, was scuba diving at age 10, and much more. He was curious and adventurous. He was recognized often for his courage. In school, he had a lot of friends and was liked by his teachers. He was enthusiastic and wore a bright smile.

*By middle school*, Billy developed a passion for entrepreneurship and technology. He read computer-programming books in his spare time and started "Computer Services by Billy," building and repairing computers for neighbors and friends. His customers adored him and frequently offered to pay him multiples of his hourly rate. In contrast, he often refused to accept payment when he thought the work was "easy." He started a couple of on-line businesses when he was 12 and 13 years old, one of which was a social networking site and the other a web-hosting company that grew remarkably in size and scope. He sold both businesses at a profit.

Billy was always active in sports and loved to be part of a team, as he does to this day.

From an early age, it was clear Billy was compassionate and cared deeply for others. For example, when a friend developed a bad case of social anxiety, Billy did everything he could think of to help him. He would sit with him in the guidance counselor's office during lunch period, offered him prizes if he would walk into class with him, and ran straight to his house after school if he was absent.

*In High School*, Billy made friends quickly. He is still close with those friends and they are standing by him through his current troubles. When Billy started dating, he had lovely girlfriends and I was proud to see him treat them with respect and behaving like a gentleman. Also, Billy often befriended kids who were otherwise left out; there were mothers who approached me to express their gratitude.

Billy was diagnosed with ADHD but chose not to take medication. He believed it was better to learn to cope with the associated challenges in his own way. To this day, Billy takes a strong stance against drugs, whether medicinal or recreational.

Billy played high school football and he also picked up Brazilian Jiu Jitsu on his own. This is one of many examples of his curiosity for new and different things. Also impressive were the discipline he applied to the sport and the way he embraced friendships with people from all walks of life.

Billy continued working on technology every opportunity he had. One of his new initiatives involved making recruiting videos for aspiring college athletes. He worked tirelessly to make the videos the best they could be and his customers were always very pleased.

As a teenager Billy continued to exhibit empathy for others. On a training trip to Brazil, he came across a little boy selling self-made paintings at the entrance to one of the favelas. I insisted we pass him by, as we were just starting the tour. But Billy kept thinking about the boy, feeling that just a few dollars could make a difference in his life and appreciating that he had worked hard to make a product to sell, rather than just asking for a handout. Billy finally found the boy a few days later and bought his painting. Billy went back to Brazil a few years later, found the boy again, bought a second painting, and has had both framed on his bedroom wall ever since.

When Billy went on a church mission trip to Mexico, the group built a concrete house for a woman and her children. Billy could not shake the image of the woman lying on the concrete floor, crying in gratitude. He talked about her for months.

*For college*, Billy went to Bucknell University to pursue a degree in Computer Engineering. In his second semester he won a venture capital competition. When the spring report card came we learned he had hardly gone to class and that he had been spending the bulk of his time on a start-up called Sping. It was decided he would take a year off from college to pursue his idea. My husband and I assumed he would finally fail, learn some important lessons and go back to being a college kid. Long story short, he was accepted to an accelerator program called DreamIt Ventures, was interviewed on television and various print media, was dubbed one of the youngest ever to raise venture capital, was speaking at universities, high schools and trade conferences, and more. He was completely supporting himself from the age of 19 and never made it back to school.

To this day, I believe not finishing college was a big mistake. First of all, I believe he needed that time to mature. Secondly, he had only worked on start-ups and he missed out on the

opportunity to get the training that is important to professionally manage a company, whether through coursework or corporate internships and jobs.

*In his early 20's*, Billy continued to grow and was running Spiling, Magnises, Fyre App, two non-profits (Accelerate and LEAP) and doing consulting work and speaking engagements galore. He had employees in various locations and was working non-stop. He maintained a constant interest in learning and could contribute to conversations on a wide variety of topics. You could forget how young he was.

What we saw that we liked: he was an incredible boss and mentor to many; he helped many of our friends' kids, his sister's friends, and others explore their career interests and find jobs; he seemed to have many successful adult mentors in his life that cared about him; we met some of his investors and employees and they spoke so positively about Billy – we heard "I learn something from Billy every day;" we were hearing great things about his work, integrity, ethics and good sense from people we knew who were doing business with him, as well as from people we met along the way who would tell us what a "fine son" we had raised; what he did with those children in the Bronx, encouraging them to have hope and think about how they could have a better future for themselves and their communities; despite his busy life, he always made time for his elderly grandparents, especially his "Papou," who taught him how to crab, drive a boat and route for the Jets; Billy remained a family boy and his cousins are his closest friends; he was respectful to everyone, no matter what the person's position or status.

What frightened us: he and the people around him were very confident in their abilities, and we thought maybe too confident; we wondered how a kid this young could manage all of these people and all of these businesses; he never took a class in financial management or accounting, and he needed it; he was working so hard he was having heart palpitations and had to see a cardiologist; he was making and handling too much money for a kid his age; he has ADHD and it seemed like things were getting a bit scattered; he was "star struck" and seemed too impressed by the famous people and "influencers" who were cozying up to him.

Billy was living the dream when he became buddies with his childhood music idol and, at age 23, started FYRE App with him and another repeat partner/investor. Then they came up with the idea for FYRE Festival. My husband and I advised Billy not to do it, pointing out the complexity and risks. But like many 24-year olds, he did not heed his parents' advice. And, unlike most 24-year olds, he believed he could pull off the best festival ever, complete with transportation, food, lodging, entertainment, sports, art, and activities galore. He had never failed at anything before and he is a great optimist.

He was working frantically in the months leading up to the festival. Billy invited us to visit the Bahamas to see what was going on. It was a massive undertaking. The team was working so hard. People whom he admired seemed to be encouraging him to keep going bigger, suggesting even more perks for the event. I witnessed someone firing key team members when there wasn't much time remaining, leaving it to Billy to pick up the pieces and find replacements. Billy did not complain. He said, "I will figure it out." By this time, he was 25 years old and had tremendous weight on his shoulders. He also still had businesses back home that he was running and/or in the process of selling.

Despite what he might have done related to the festival, I truly believe Billy did not intend to hurt anybody; that he thought they would pull off the festival (it might have some kinks,

but it was overall going to be a great success) and everything would be okay for everyone involved. I am not saying this as a justification, just an insight.

When Billy decided to cancel both weekends of the festival, I think it was actually somewhat of an honorable move. I was there, so it was something I sensed in all that was happening. He could have kept going (as some of his team wanted to do - at least for the second weekend) with the hope of turning things around, but he was willing to accept defeat and face the consequences, rather than risk more damage and potentially bodily harm to anyone. He told me that security was his paramount concern. He was devastated that they were not able to deliver the festival they had promised.

*Over the past year, after his arrest*, as a family we have talked a lot about the dangers of being too optimistic, of skipping steps and getting ahead of oneself, that rules and laws apply to everyone without exception, the perils of pursuing fame and fortune, and that lying should never be perceived as the only way out of a predicament. I believe he has learned these lessons and many more, and in the most painful way.

Despite the extreme pain, shock and disappointment I feel over what Billy has done, I have been impressed by the way he has handled himself in the aftermath. First, he refuses to pass the blame for anything, taking responsibility as the CEO. Many people have tried to give Billy a pass on what he did, and he will not take it. He is devastated that he has caused others pain, and he feels that blaming others does not mitigate his own responsibility. He says all the time that he feels worse about what he has done to his family, friends, investors and customers than to himself. He is sorry and ashamed. As I mentioned earlier, Billy is all about learning and self-improvement. He has spent this entire year doing just that. He himself has said, "I have learned more in the past year than in my entire life."

As Billy's mom, I have seen everything he has hoped for since he was a little boy, and I know that he has never wanted anything as badly as he wants to get his life back on track, make amends to everyone who lost something, and make real contributions to his community over the rest of his life.

Please consider that Billy was only 23 when he co-founded FYRE, 24 when he co-founded the festival, and 25 at its date. I hope you will give him the chance to make things right and not let the mistakes he made rob him of what's left of his youth. Please let him have the opportunity to live a normal, honest, productive and happy life. He is an amazing person in so many ways, loved and respected by so many. I hope you will find that he is deserving of mercy and leniency.

Respectfully yours,



Irene McFarland



# CONSTRUCTION SOLUTIONS 911

Construction, Concrete, Mold & Fire

Honorable Judge Naomi Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10022

Re: Billy McFarland

I am Billy McFarland's uncle. I find Billy to be in a very similar life pattern as mine. When I was a young man, I was an entrepreneur. Billy has also received this trait from his grandfather and father. I unfortunately made some personal decisions as an entrepreneur that were considered incorrect by society. I received an extremely fair and lenient second chance and it changed my life completely.

Today, because of that "fear of future punishment" and the understanding of addictions, I have a business that supports over 100 people and their families. Billy's success will be much greater than that. His past has proven more successes than failures. Growth comes from mistakes and he will grow beyond your, mine, and societies expectations, if he is given a second chance.

Your decision on Billy's future is the most important one that he will ever face. I know that as an uncle, leniency is an obvious request but your understanding of his strength in facing the music and resolving the issues caused by him will be his life changing education. I believe that you can help him complete the process through a fair and logical sentencing that includes a very lenient outcome.

Thank you for your time and honorable decision on this matter.

Sincerely,



Scott McFarland

PA#132858

A - Page 10  
Phoenixville, PA

Steve McFarland  
[REDACTED]  
Morristown, New Jersey [REDACTED]

The Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald  
United States District Court  
Southern District of New York  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I write this letter with a heavy heart, never imagining that my son would be guilty of a felony. Billy has been blessed with an exceptional mind and unfortunately he made some bad decisions that will impact him for the rest of his life. Hopefully, Your Honor, you will punish him appropriately and allow him to get the help he needs so he can channel his abilities in a meaningful and productive way that will allow him to rebuild his life and benefit him, his family and society.

For a little background, Billy comes from a tight knit, extended family. He has a younger sister and six cousins on his mother's side and four cousins on the McFarland side. He spends all holidays and most summer weekends with these cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents. He is truly loved by all. Billy is exceptionally bright, energetic, handsome, gregarious and entrepreneurial. From a young age Billy has been fixated on founding businesses. I can honestly say I do not think he does this for the money but more for the thrill and exhilaration that these ventures bring on. He ended his formal education after one year of college as he felt that he could not waste three years of student life while he could be working full time implementing his ideas on multiple start-up ventures.

I implore you, Your Honor, to see this situation for what it really is. A twenty five year old boy, who never had experienced business failure and felt invincible, simply got way out ahead of himself. Both investors and employees alike eagerly sought to be part of his energy, enthusiasm, and joined his team. Quite frankly, he overloaded his abilities and simply got himself in a desperate situation by trying to pull off, as we now know, an ill-conceived festival against overwhelming odds. His actions were by no means an act of personal enrichment, but I believe were driven by his fear of failure and letting down his team, investors, and ticket holders. This fear of failure lead him to cross the line between right and wrong, and for that he will always be remorseful.

As a self-employed entrepreneur myself I have preached to my children that integrity, above all else, is a measure of a person. Integrity is something that one earns and cannot be bought or given. I think daily about Billy's lack of integrity in

this situation and will carry the burden of not getting this message through to him. Billy knows how I feel about this and I truly believe he is devastated for letting me down.

As his father, I ask you for leniency, as I do not want him to go jail. I think the felony conviction and the restitution aspect of this case is punishment enough and will be a daily reminder of his mistakes and a huge deterrent for many years to come. Billy has accepted full responsibility for his failures, admitted his guilt and has not blamed or implicated anyone else. He truly understands that what he did was wrong and I do not think that going to jail could possibly make him more remorseful. I believe he can do more for society by being sentenced to a very structured release program where his talents can be utilized to help others in the community and when appropriate utilize his abilities to help maximize recovery from the Festival for both investors and ticket holders alike.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Steve McFarland", written in a cursive style.

Steve McFarland



[REDACTED]  
New York, NY  
[REDACTED]

19 April 2018

Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Billy McFarland

Your Honor:

My name is Christopher O'Sullivan and I am Billy's first cousin. I have known Billy all my life, and am very lucky to call him my best friend. For as long as I can remember, we have been at each other's sides. Growing up, our families lived five blocks away from each other at the Jersey Shore where we would spend our summers together. In the Fall, we would attend Jets games together with our fathers and grandfather on Sundays, and have Cousins' Day with the rest of the family on Fridays. We would see each other at every holiday and family gathering throughout the year, and instant messenger each other every night during the school week. When I moved to Fairfield, CT for college and Billy moved to NYC to pursue his entrepreneurial endeavors, our bond remained just as strong. I was only a train ride from Manhattan, and I would visit him often to explore the city. Now that we both work and live in the city together, our friendship has never been stronger.

In all of my social circles- high school, college, church, friends I've made in the last few years- Billy's name is often brought up in conversation. They don't all know him well personally, but they frequently bring up his name to ask how he is and what he is up to. I always loved it because it was an opportunity for me to brag about one of the most incredible human beings I am lucky enough to call my cousin and best friend. Never could I have imagined doing so under these circumstances.

When we were little kids, particularly during the summer time, we would visit our grandma and grandpa (or as we called them, Yiayia and Papou) all the time. A sunny Saturday afternoon meant a visit with our parents to Yiayia and Papou's for a swim in the backyard. More often than not, Billy and I would stay the night so we could go crabbing the following morning with Papou. He would take Billy and me out on his boat at 4am to our secret spot where the crabs would bite while Yiayia would be home preparing the rest of the feast for when we got home. It was a tradition like no other. As years went on and our Yiayia eventually passed away, Billy made sure we never forgot about Papou. Whether it was a Sunday afternoon to watch our beloved Jets or a weekend in the spring to clean up the weeds in his yard, Billy made sure to find time for his Papou whom he loved so much.

There are a million stories that come to mind that highlight Billy's compassion for others, but there are a few that stick with me the most. When we were about 10 years old, we both joined the junior sailing program at the Jersey

shore together. Billy was a quick learner and was bumped up to the advanced group within a week. Even so, he would always come to us at the beginner level and help us rig our sails, explain what we were being taught, and lend a helping hand in any way he could. While we were out on the water in high winds that were too much to handle, he would hang close by in case we found ourselves in trouble. When he got older and started making money, he extended his compassion in more philanthropic ways. I vividly remember one cold night in December leaving with Billy after an event he hosted through his company Magnises; he saw a homeless man freezing on the sidewalk, and provided him enough money for multiple nights of food and shelter. No one was there to see him do it, it was strictly done out of the kindness of his heart. Every year, my mother hosts a fashion show for the church Billy and I grew up in. And every year, Billy makes an anonymous donation and asks for nothing in return. This past winter, my sister Stacey and her friends came into the city for an afternoon brunch. Billy made a quick pit stop to say hello before running off to his next meeting. Though he didn't order anything himself, nor didn't know any of her friends, he paid the brunch himself and left before anyone could stop him.

He also has a charisma that is truly unique. He is able to befriend all walks of life; those he played sports with, played poker with, worked with, including famous rappers, European pilots, mixed martial artists in Brazil, and Bahamian locals. These people come from all types of upbringings, cultures, and socioeconomic status, yet they all are drawn to Billy because of his contagious personality, sense of humor, and joy for life. Not only has he befriended these people, but through these connections, he has helped bring hundreds of other people together to form friendships they otherwise would not have had. Many of the new friendships I have created since moving to the city are credited to Billy's introduction.

Lastly, I want to speak about the incredible mind he is blessed with. Ever since we were 13 years old, I, and anyone who spent time with him, knew he would grow up to be a star. At this time, he was barely a teenager and he was starting successful companies online by creating game websites and selling web space. After enjoying hot summer days on the beach and chasing the ice cream truck, he would go home to his computer to work with his web programmers in India that were three times his age. As he got older, he kept dreaming bigger and bigger; he withdrew from college to pursue his entrepreneurship endeavors in NYC, starting up companies from Spling, to Magnises, to Fyre Media.

In the winter of last year, it seemed as if there not a goal in sight that was out of his reach. With every undertaking being bigger, bolder, and more successful than the last, how could a 24 year old with this track record not think he is invincible? Unfortunately, that appeared to be the case with the pursuit of hosting a music festival in the Bahamas. His bites kept getting bigger than the last, and this undertaking turned out to be a much bigger bite than he could've imagined. The vision he and the rest of his team hoped to bring to a reality required significantly more money, time, resources, and expertise to pull off than they had to offer. And while the final result fell incredibly short, from the time I spent with the Fyre team as they worked tirelessly to pull this off, the effort was undoubtedly there.

Billy screwed up. What he did he wishes he could take back. Had he known what he was up against, we wouldn't be in this situation. We need to learn from our

mistakes to make sure they don't happen again. I think he has learned a great deal in this past year through the fallout, backlash, and public humiliation. And through all of this, the comment that has stuck with me the most is how he feels so bad for the pain he caused his family.

But if there's one thing I know for certain, it's that someone with his character, his heart, and his gift doesn't belong rotting in a jail cell, but rather out in the world where he can make a truly significant impact on people's lives, as he has already shown his ability to do. If given a second chance, there's no limit to the good he can bring to this world. I pray you find him worthy of that chance.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christopher O'Sullivan". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid.

Christopher O'Sullivan

Mountainside, NJ

April 2, 2018

Judge Naomi Relce Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY

Re: Billy McFarland

Your Honor:

Billy McFarland is my dear nephew, the son my sister Irene and my brother-in-law Steve. Billy is also the cousin and best friend of my son Christopher, known as "Topher."

Billy is the guy that we have always called the "exclamation point." Always happy, always laughing, always the joy in the room, Billy brings out life, energy, and fun. But he is more than that. He is kind, he is attentive, helpful, and inclusive. He truly is a friend to all. And a friend immediately. Throughout the years, I have seen him interact with people he knows and people he just meets. Everyone takes a liking to him. Our neighbors and friends and Topher's friends all love him and gravitate to him.

There are some people who attract others to them because of power, or wealth, or being the class bully, or being the jock, whatever, but Billy attracts people because of his good nature and his HEART. He is truly one of the good guys. This is a characteristic that comes out in his smile, his demeanor, and his honest interest in and caring for other people. With Billy in a crowd, no one stands alone. He is that kind of person.

Until my father passed away, my nephew spent so much time with my father, Billy's handicapped grandfather. He called my father after every JETS game, he visited my father and talked and laughed with him every week, and during holidays, even with a houseful of guests, he spent time with his grandfather. When his paternal grandparents come to visit, he gives them his room, and I watch as he gives them his loving attention.

Billy is probably the fastest thinker I know, and he is a tremendously fast problem solver. Billy is also very optimistic, loves a challenge, and thrives on challenge. He is creative. His mind is always working. Sometimes racing (sometimes scattered). I have seen Billy working on several projects and once, and I would be exhausted just watching him in action!

Having said that, I worried about Billy with the planning of the Fyre festival. I have chaired my church fashion show four times, I planned my daughter's large wedding, and am planning another daughter's wedding while preparing to chair yet another fashion show. Fashion shows and weddings are major undertakings! Even with my experience and life wisdom, the endless details, the surprises, the things that can go wrong, the unintended mistakes, the unanticipated issues, especially the problems that can and do occur the first time running these events that need to be considered and planned for- these were the things I thought about when a mere 25-year-old took on such an enormous undertaking as the Fyre festival.

I traveled with Billy's parents to the Fyre Festival weekend. I couldn't wait to witness the accomplishments of my nephew of whom I was so very proud. We arrived in Nassau early Thursday morning, before the rush of arrivals. Upon arriving in Nassau, we were led to a puddle jumper to fly to the Island of Great Exuma where the festival was to be held. Although we were only eight people in our group, and being in an almost otherwise empty airport, not all of our luggage made it to the island with us. When we arrived at our hotel, tried to check in, and found the reservations were a disaster, as the hotel staff did not know how to properly record reservations. (We were NOT in America...) Little did we know this was just the tip of the iceberg that created the disaster that led Billy to this point.

Even with the storms, the water main break, the shake-downs by the locals, the delivery problems, the drug boat sitting off-shore and other serious, unexpected, unanticipated issues that hit Billy all in a day, he worked frantically, non-stop, to solve the problems and allow the festival to proceed, and it was not until 2am Friday of the start of festival weekend that my nephew realized that he had to call off the festival. He then quickly developed a plan to get everyone safely and quickly off the island. Safety was his primary concern. I want you to know this-that the decision to cancel the festival last-minute is probably the best example of who Billy is-determined, dedicated, hardworking, willing to take the blame and suffer the consequences of his decision, in the end his primary concern was the safety of the attendees (unlike another concert where there were fatalities). He is a man of great character. He didn't run. He didn't hide. He didn't turn a blind eye to the realities in front of him. He didn't take a chance with the safety of the participants. In contrast to the portrayal of Billy by the media, I, as a witness, could not have been more proud of him than I was that day and the days and months that have followed.

I am sure you will learn from other letters about Billy's donations of laptops, his tutoring, his helping the homeless, and other many good deeds that Billy has performed over the years.

In conclusion, what I wish to convey the most is that Billy is a very fine young man who was way too young and inexperienced to have taken on the Fyre festival with all the logistics, the investments, the foreign country complications, etc., that led him to the position he is in now. He may have made mistakes, but I do not believe he has a bad bone in his body. I love my nephew, I am proud of him, and I am so sad that in his efforts to overcome tremendous obstacles to make this festival happen, he was clearly overwhelmed and over his head and just messed up. For Billy, this festival was biting off more than this 25-year-old could chew. We all make mistakes when we do that. We have all been there- certainly not to this degree (the fatal flaw), but we know what it is like to be overwhelmed and over our heads...this poor kid...

To let you know the extent of my belief in the goodness of Billy, I share with you that my husband and I had offered to provide any help whatsoever to Billy, regardless of any financial pain to us. However, although appreciative, Billy did not want to inflict his problem on others, and so he declined the offer.

With his brain and his heart and his good character, Billy can do so much good for society. He is a good boy. I pray that you will treat this case with kindness and understanding.

Sincerely,



Janet Zervakos O'Sullivan



██████████  
Mountainside, NJ ██████████  
██████████

May 3, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY

Re: Billy McFarland

Your Honor:

Billy McFarland is a fine young man that I have known for his whole life. He is my nephew, the son to my sister-in law Irene who is the sister to my wife, Janet. Billy comes from a fine well-respected family which I feel extends to our family as we are all close relatives that includes our son Christopher, who grew up with Billy not only as a cousin but one of Billy's best friends.

Billy has always been a caring and giving person to all people that I know and to those I know that have met him. Billy is a lovable fun person full of kindness and laughter while giving of his heart and generous behavior. He has always been a self-starter thinking of how to improve things and finding solutions to problems in the technology world that excited him to make things better for everyone.

Billy found success in so many of his endeavors and like all those of the younger generation you don't truly become wise until you experience failure for with experience comes wisdom.

With the Fyre festival it was a dream of Billy's to have this event at a sight he remembered visiting as a child and yet although he worked around the clock to bring the event to a success it all came crashing down because it was such an overwhelming project where so many of the problems were out of his control. Yet, he made the hard decision to cancel for the safety of the people early on which was a brave step knowing the disappointment and anger people would feel.

Billy is truly a young man with courage always moving so fast because he is so smart taking on so much but this time, with no true experience, success was hard when it is something he had never done. When people step back and realize what a major project it was it is easy to see how things could go wrong but everyone can learn a lesson about so many unintended consequences.

With all the stress and pain this has caused so many, Billy has been a young man of character truly with intentions ready to try and remedy the failure of this event. I hope and pray you see Billy as the quality person that I see along with so many of his family and friends and treat him with fairness and understanding.

Sincerely,

  
Joseph P. O'Sullivan

Jose E. Arrunategui

[REDACTED]  
Rahway, NJ [REDACTED]

March 21, 2018

To: The Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald

Re: Billy McFarland

My name is Jose E. Arrunategui. I am a paramedic of 4 years. I currently work for University Hospital in Newark, NJ and MONOC who represents RWJBHC hospitals in the Union and Essex county area. Also, I am a current Brazilian Jiu Jitsu student and purple belt at Elijah Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (EBJJ) school in Union, NJ.

I am writing on behalf of the character of Billy McFarland. I met Billy at EBJJ around 2011. Billy was very personable and we all liked him. He quickly became part of the family. Billy was polite and entrusted with teaching the kids class. He was well trusted in our school; which is my opinion as well. Billy was consistent and always came to class and gave it his all. I must say his skills improved greatly during the time we trained together. From what I knew of him, he had a very humble personality. He always reached out to the newer students. It was a pleasure knowing him. When we talk about him at EBJJ we speak nothing but good things. I would enjoy getting together and catching up with him again.

I really hope this letter helps Billy out. He is someone who learns from his mistakes. Billy has so much potential. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jose E. Arrunategui



To whom it may concern,

My name is Bryant Baerga, I reside at [REDACTED] Mine Hill, NJ. I am a twelve year veteran Police Officer for the Millburn Township Police Department and also served in the United States Marine Corp from 2001 – 2007.

I am writing this letter in hopes of shedding a little bit of light on my friendship with Billy McFarland. I first met Billy at a dojo for Brazilian Jiu Jitsu name EBJJ out of Union, NJ. I trained with Billy on many occasions for approximately two years and always found him to be a very respectful, courteous and kind young man. It also just happened to be that his family also lived in the town which I worked for, Millburn, NJ and whenever I saw Billy around town he never presented any problems.

Billy was always a great teammate while training with him, very dependable and just an overall nice guy.

Sincerely,

Bryant Baerga

Jason L. Baptiste

[REDACTED]  
New York, NY  
[REDACTED]

May 13, 2018

Judge Naomi Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10004

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I'm writing on behalf of Billy McFarland, who I have known for almost four years. I consider Billy a close friend, though the majority of my interactions with him have been as an entrepreneur. Through these interactions, I have only experienced a kind and thoughtful young man that wanted to build a product that could have an impact on the world. I was an advisor to his company, Magnises, and have only seen Billy act with integrity. My word is my bond and I would not say this if I did not mean it.

I also hope that I can provide some perspective on what it's like to be a young entrepreneur and the stresses that come with it. It doesn't justify the actions that Billy is accused of, but I hope it can give you additional perspective when deciding upon a just sentence.

Like Billy, I started a company at a young age and was fortunate to experience some success along the way. While many on the outside see that as a reason to celebrate, it's often a road to depression and stress. All of the "smart people in the room" often suggest to grow at all costs, otherwise your creation is at risk of dying. As a young individual without sufficient support or mentorship, this pressure can cause one to make poor judgment calls. Once again, this does not justify poor judgment calls, but I hope it gives perspective on what may have caused them.

I do not believe Billy is an individual with criminal intentions. I believe that if he is guided in the right direction to use his talents, he could have a truly positive impact on society. Billy still has many years ahead of him and I hope your sentencing can ultimately allow him to harness his talents to have this positive impact on society.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Jason L. Baptiste

April 24, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street, Courtroom 21A  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

I am writing to outline a bit of my experience knowing Billy McFarland. I met Billy back in 2006, when he joined The Pingry School our Freshman year of high school. I had been at Pingry since the third grade and we had a well-established group of friends. Billy immediately integrated himself into our friend group and quickly became one of my close male classmates both inside and outside of the classroom.

At Pingry, Billy was always motivated to do more than just the assigned curriculum. He had a true entrepreneurial and business oriented spirit. I would often see Billy taking extracurricular time to work on, what seemed to be, various business endeavors, none of which I ever knew many details of. I do know that I would often see Billy on his computer and/or phone, working seemingly hard to achieve something greater than just academics. Billy was also a dedicated teammate and a leader to his juniors on the football and lacrosse fields. I witnessed his leadership first hand as I attended many of these sporting events. Lastly, within a high school setting, Billy was an all-around great friend. He was a light spirit to be around and a good listener. He was willing to work hard, but also enjoy the various pleasures life had to offer. I always felt I could lean on Billy as a confidant. He kept a stoic attitude and always had a smile on his face. He never appeared flustered or bothered, which is a refreshing quality.

After graduation, it was clear that Billy wanted to forge a career in the business world. As aforementioned, Billy had a fiery, entrepreneurial spirit that I could appreciate, being similarly minded myself. He was motivated to create and lead something bigger in this world. It was not too much of a surprise to me when Billy dropped out of school to pursue entrepreneurship full-time. While at sometimes it seemed Billy might be biting off more than he could chew, none of his good friends wanted to doubt his efforts. I always told Billy that I would support him however I could, because I believed that he could be greatly successful. Billy always included me and our other close friends in his social gatherings. He always wanted to be surrounded by and support his friends and create a feeling of close knit community within a large and often isolating city.

I hope these notes provide some insight.

Best,  
Natalie

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York  
c/o Randall W Jackson

Re: William McFarland

Dear Judge Buchwald:

My name is Jason Bell. I am writing this letter in support of William McFarland ("Billy") with the hope that my accounting of what I personally observed and know about Billy helps establish what kind of person he really is.

Before I explain what I know to be true about Billy, I want to provide a bit of background about myself in order to rationalize where my opinions come from. I graduated with a B.A from U.C.L.A and a M.B.A from The University of Miami. I have been fortunate enough to experience several "careers" throughout my life and they have taken me throughout the world. I am a former NFL player, a current NFL commentator for two television shows on the BBC and a partner at a private wealth management firm, Masters Private Client Group. I have played for the New York Giants, the Dallas Cowboys and the Houston Texans. I provide financial advice to some of the most successful people in the world, in combination with being a television commentator.

My path has allowed me to meet many successful people from all walks of life, ranging from top athletes out of difficult and impoverished neighborhoods to high net worth individuals from the upper one percent. Even among this crowd of successful people, Billy stood out the minute I met him, and for good reasons.

I met Billy about five years ago at an event from one of his previous ventures: "Magnises". We immediately hit it off because we both had the same drive and determination to strive to be the best at what we do. And he did: Billy reached the upper sphere of the technology world in his early twenties. But Billy did not let his financial success get to his head, and he did not become selfish, which so often happens in that world when one reaches his level of success. Usually, at that level, ideas are kept confidential, relationships and connections are tightly defended, and when one gets a mentor, they rarely share that mentor's access with others. Billy operates in the exact opposite way on each of these counts.

As I became a close friend of Billy, I was able to see him through his successes and I was able to observe how he continued to interact with other people, even if they were just starting out or were going through difficult times. I saw how he constantly shared his latest thoughts. How he willingly introduced his vast network to me and to other people, even if they just recently met. And that's what really stuck me about Billy: he actually receives joy and fulfillment out of providing his help and see people succeed: his willingness to help out people, even when he has / had absolutely nothing to gain from it, is genuine. This is a very rare quality in a person.

A good example is what he did for a good friend of mine, Antonio Pierce. Many professional athletes do not convert back to regular life well. Having recently retired from the New York Giants, Antonio was a former athlete that bucked the trend and made a successful conversion by becoming a NFL analyst for ESPN. However, broadcasting is an intensely competitive business where who you know matters almost as much as what you know. What Antonio was looking for was a mentor, someone that could guide him with his newfound career. Upon hearing that and without anything to be gained from it, Billy set up a meeting between Antonio and one of his own mentor, Bruce Paisner, former president of Hearst Entertainment Inc., and a prominent figure in the broadcasting world. This meeting eventually led to Bruce becoming Antonio's mentor.

The value of such relationship is priceless. In essence, this means that Billy shared one of his most highly prized assets, his mentor. The fact that he almost immediately went out of his way to help Antonio, someone he barely knew then, speaks volume about Billy. Billy has done this so many times that I lost count over the years. He's provided the means and enabled many other people to be successful, over and over. These people have come from all walks of life and circumstances. More often than not, Billy had nothing to gain from his efforts, yet still did it.

I could write several more pages about stories similar to this one. I'm sure other letters will explain their writer's own stories about Billy in addition to his notable charitable acts. The point is, Billy is a unique individual in the sense that he doesn't just act for selfish purposes. He is one of those few people that truly believe that "my one, plus your one, equals three". When he sees someone that could benefit from his input, he goes out and provides that input. It is that quality that has led many people generating great value in a multitude of ventures.

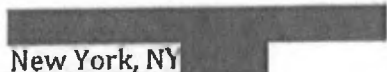
I know Billy does not belong in prison and I am positive that he will do whatever it takes to never again face that prospect. Since the Fyre Festival, he has already drastically changed how he conducts business. He has surrounded himself with good, competent and professional people and removed the negative influences. I can tell from personal observation that the whole experience has changed him, for the better, at his deepest level.

Despite the incoming sentencing, he has strived to continue helping other people with their own ventures, even when he still has nothing to gain from his investment of time and energy. This reinforces what I know to be true: that Billy is a self-less "creator", and given the chance will continue to create value for society, value for people. I know that he will continue to care for his friends and family but also for almost complete strangers. I know that he is a good person and deserves as much leniency as possible. If given a second a chance, I am absolutely convinced that Billy will do great many things for people and for society as a whole.


This world is in dire needs of more people like Billy. I hope this letter helps convey Billy's true personality that he has constantly demonstrated to me over the years that I have known him. If more information or comments are needed, please reach out to me at any time that is convenient for you.

Sincerely,

Jason Bell



New York, NY





Christopher Bledsoe

New York, NY

May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
Daniel Patrick Moynihan Federal Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10007

c/o Randall Jackson  
575 Lexington Avenue  
New York, NY 10022

Dear Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald:

I am writing with respect to Billy McFarland. I first met Billy in 2015. His company, Magnises, appeared to be uncovering novel ways to bring people together, and in a society plagued by a growing loneliness epidemic, I was struck that unique events and shared experiences could prove a useful antidote for so many individuals. With this in mind, my communal living company, Ollie, engaged the Magnises team to organize such gatherings for our community of residents – a decision that was consistently validated by our residents in subsequent surveys.

In the months following Fyre Festival, which I later learned was organized by another of Billy's companies, it was important to me that our community members continued to have access to the get-togethers and meet-ups they had come to value so deeply. During this time, I witnessed Billy's attempt to salvage or sell Magnises, but what stood out to me even more was his focus on protecting the livelihood of Magnises' employees -- going so far as to release Ollie from a non-solicitation clause that would have otherwise prevented the hiring of Magnises' employees. The decision, which enabled Ollie to hire the Magnises team, demonstrated Billy's prioritization of the emotional well-being of his team members above his own economic interests.

In short, although Billy could have chosen to disengage from those around him during this period and retreat into a mode of self-preservation, he instead opted to focus on ensuring a smooth employment transition for a group of individuals who were victims of circumstances outside of their control. I felt this story might be worthwhile to share with you and I'm willing to provide further details if you might find it helpful. Please do not hesitate to reach out at your convenience.


Sincerely,

Christopher Bledsoe



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Josh Blue



1st May 2018

Dear Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

My name is Josh Blue. I'm a tech entrepreneur, with a background in philanthropy work across the health and youth development industries. During my adult years, I've faced great challenges along with great wins that've made me the person I am today. These challenges have enabled me to work and grow alongside great individuals in many industries, from tech, fashion, all the way to finance and politics. These experiences have made an everlasting impact on my career trajectory, knowledge of life & family and most importantly, what it means to stand up for someone or something you believe in. Each of these interactions have brought great value and impact to many people around me.

A great friend of mine Billy McFarland has been a constant source of both ends of the spectrum in my life with his go-getter personality and constant vision for innovation. He's the one individual I can say to this day, gave me my first real shot when a lot of people wouldn't within the tech and entrepreneurial landscape. From the first day of meeting him he has shown me and my people nothing but genuine love, friendship, compassion and something that often goes overlooked; truthfulness.

I happen to meet Billy as he was building Magnises in the earlier stages of development. I learned about the Magnises opportunity after seeing it being advertised online through Facebook. I was desperately looking for a way to connect with other entrepreneurs like myself and to garnish long lasting friendships that would ultimately push me forward in my career. Initially, I was accepted into Magnises as a member but I took it upon myself to doing something literally crazy. Instead of accepting the invite into the Magnises membership, I decided to work for Magnises. After some careful decision making, the choice was made to forgo the regular application process and find a way to contact the CEO directly. An ad was posted to Facebook with a chance to win a spectacular prize and all you had to do was contact the CEO and to my surprise he was the main point of contact. I immediately contacted the number and to my surprise, I received a rather quick response from Billy.

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I didn't inquire about the grand prize. Immediately, I conveyed my enthusiasm about achieving great things in life for other people and myself, helping to build great business like Magnises and to foster great business and personal relationships. He saw my drive and vision immediately and the rest was history. We set up a meeting for the next day at a restaurant located in downtown Manhattan and 3 days later after that, I was working for an amazing company which was Magnises. This opportunity forever jump-started my career and friendship with a thoughtful and innovative person such as Billy which ultimately put me in the position I am in today as a full-time tech entrepreneur.

What I love about Billy, is his ability to admit his wins and his losses. As a young human being, he's been able to achieve many great things that some people could only dream of but he's also been a part of a nightmare that most people would never think of. This uncanny look at both sides of the spectrum is essential to maturing as a person. His ability to connect with people, grants him the insight to fostering belief in people so they can achieve and become a higher version of themselves.

With that being said, I would love to leave you with a mindset that really tells the story of who Billy McFarland is deep down inside and that providing value to individuals inside and out of business is his ultimate mark on life. Letting him properly correct his mistakes is what other generations of people need to see so this can to give them hope and security of a better future. That every decision can't be perfect, but what you do after each decision is made is what makes you the person you ultimately become.

Sincerely,

Josh Blue

Co-founder & Philanthropist

Mitchell Blumenfeld

Downingtown, PA

April 25, 2018

Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald  
Daniel Patrick Moynihan Federal Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am writing today in support of Billy McFarland, who I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with over the past eight years. I first met Billy as a college freshman during a career networking event between new students and alumni of Bucknell University's College of Engineering. From our first meeting he struck me as a passionate and dedicated entrepreneur, with strong ideas and a compelling presence – something I have rarely encountered when meeting with first-year students.

As Billy and his growing team incubated a new business idea through an on campus business plan competition and into existence as a fledgling company, I saw that he also possessed a strong drive and ability to bring his ideas to life through a combination of creativity and hard work. I was one of the first outside investors in this new company and helped him network with other advisers and potential investors. I was always impressed with his willingness to seek and act upon feedback, ability to learn from setbacks, and drive to keep things moving toward an often difficult goal. My experiences working with Billy have always been transparent, forthright, and honest, leading me to invest further as he founded another new company a few years later. All of my business and personal dealings with Billy have been characterized by honesty and integrity, which is why I have supported several of his ventures over the years.

It is my experience that Billy is a fundamentally good person and I will always be available to him for advice and support behind a good idea. I believe he is due a second chance to prove the strength of his ideas and character beyond the mistakes that have brought him before your courtroom. Thank you, Your Honor, for considering these thoughts as you deliberate on the appropriate sentence in this matter.

Respectfully,



Mitchell Blumenfeld

Judge Buckwald,

My name is Christopher Bristole, and my music name is Jody Mack. I am one of the original members of the revolutionary rap group 'Cash Money Click.' After 'Cash Money Click,' I worked under Def Jam as a partner of Ja Rule. I have spent the better part of 25 years in the music industry.

During my time in the industry, I have seen a lot of people come and go. I have seen a lot of egos. I have seen a lot of fake people. I have seen it all. With all of this, I came close to someone that on paper is totally different than me, Billy. Billy and I come from completely different background and circumstances. We also have completely different life experiences. But, what struck me, was not only was Billy one of the best innovators I had met in the industry, he truly looked out for the people around him. Billy was real and transparent to everyone around him.

Whenever something went well, Billy is the first person to credit everyone other than himself. When something didn't go well, Billy always stood up first and said it was all his fault. His ability to spread the love and take the fall in any circumstance, while also having intelligence-- I've never seen in any circumstance. I've worked with most of the superstars in the music world, but Billy's qualities make him the true star.

I saw Billy working throughout the months leading up to, and on site, during the Fyre Festival. He worked so hard. He was in terrible shape - mentally, physically, and emotionally. He put everything he had to make the event work. He had hundreds of people calling him at the same time, all leaning on him, including the wealthy investors. He tried his best. He also had assembled a large team to help him with all aspects of the event. They all tried hard. And, as always, Billy took full responsibility. Someone who raises everyone up, is very smart, and takes it all on his shoulders while spreading praise - how can the system not give this guy his freedom? There should be other consequences beyond a lock and key.

Jody

Nicholas Brown

Medford, NJ

04/27/2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald:

The purpose of this letter is to provide a character reference for Billy McFarland whom I have known since we were eight years old. Throughout my life, Billy has served as a best friend, an incredible inspiration, and an older brother that I never had. Early on in our friendship it was clear that Billy was different. As next door neighbors in the shore town of Seaside Park, NJ, most of our friend group was concerned with going to the beach, surfing, and chasing the ice-cream man. Although Billy participated in all of those "normal kid" activities, he really had much bigger goals and aspirations. By the time we were just 13 years old, he would routinely leave the beach throughout the day to check in on his internet company that he owned and operated. He was leading high-level business calls with businessmen four times his age before our evening water balloon fights. He was teaching himself complex computer coding before our usual activity of riding bikes around the neighborhood. We couldn't even have a normal sidewalk stand that sold *only* lemonade under Billy's watch! Before you knew it, we had a full-sized operation, crafting up homemade water ice and sending our friends to market our business down the street and on different blocks. The point is — even at such a young age, Billy's mind was focused on delivering *more* value to *more* people in any ethical way possible. Billy has been gifted with both a blessing and a curse — he can only think BIG.

One anecdote in particular that I would like to share took place in October of 2016. I happened to be in New York City and Billy and I wanted to meet to could catch up, so I agreed to head over to the Fyre Media office. He and his team were still hard at work during the evening, and I was invited to sit in on their meeting. The topic of discussion: *should they throw a festival in the Bahamas to supplement their media business?* All of Fyre's top people were there and all members of the team brainstormed how they could pull off throwing a once-in-a-lifetime event. They immediately dove into discussing logistics, legal barriers, governmental barriers, costs, raising capital, etc. The energy in the room was profound, and it was centered on one thesis: how can we actually deliver this once-in-a-lifetime experience to our customers? There was absolutely no mention of scamming investors, not living up to the hype, nor doing anything but right by their paying customers. They sincerely wanted to and intended to handle this venture.

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald

04/27/2018

Page 2

I know that Billy does not have a criminal bone in his body, although I am not here to defend the charges in which he has already plead guilty. I believe that any wrongdoing that proceeded to take place after that meeting is because Billy thought that, in the end, he could make everything right. I believe that Billy's mind generates ideas so quickly, and sometimes it gets too far ahead of his actions. He can occasionally overlook smaller details because he is so focused on the end result — the BIG picture. In this case, those smaller details ultimately amounted to the downturn of this venture.

To put Billy and his incredible mind behind bars would be, in my opinion, a disservice to society. He is the hardest worker that I have ever known. Even after the festival, when everything unwound, he immediately went back to work to make things right and pay back anyone and everyone affected. That is the type of person that he is; even if Billy lost everything, he would turn around and start rebuilding. Not just for his personal gain and reputation, but for the love of being an eternal optimist, thinking big, making large contributions, and inspiring those around him.

Sincerely,

*Nicholas Brown*

Nicholas Brown



Josh Cairns c/o Vortilla LLC

New York, NY

4th April 2018

The Honourable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St,  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am writing to you concerning the sentencing of Mr William McFarland.

I have known Mr McFarland as a business associate and friend since 2015, when I met him via his previous venture, Magnises. I believe Mr McFarland to be a very sincere and honest young man.

He and I have openly spoken together about his dreams for his various businesses and how he hoped they would impact the world in a positive way. Mr McFarland has always demonstrated himself to be a kind person, giving up his most valuable commodity (time) to help those that requested his help, or that he could see would benefit from it.

It is my fear that we are facing a chapter in our history where people are being defined more often by their differences, than by the contents of their character. Billy is a visionary who desperately wants to reverse this trend and via his various business ventures, sought to bring all people together.

It was that desire which drove him to create a network called Magnises where young aspiring entrepreneurs across America could support each other and grow together. It was that vision which drove him to pursue the idea of a music festival where people could come together to share happiness irrespective of their background or beliefs.

Impatience and inexperience caused Billy to make mistakes in pursuing his noble vision of bringing people together. I know that after this chapter is behind him, Billy will be a highly valuable contributor to society.

Thank you, Your Honour for taking my thoughts and perspective into consideration as you deliberate on issuing an appropriate sentence.

Many thanks and kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josh Cairns', with a stylized, flowing script.

Josh Cairns  
CEO - Vortilla LLC



Chris Christensen

New York, NY

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St  
New York, NY 10007

May 1st, 2018

Your Honor,

I am writing to share with you some thoughts about my friend, Billy McFarland. I have known Billy since our freshman year of high school at the Pingry School in NJ, which was over ten years ago now. Specifically, we first met in August for preseason football practice. We were both transfers from other schools, and I think having that shared experience of being newcomers helped us get to know each other better. It was not long before we were close and looking back, I have a lot of fond memories with Billy... the classes we took together, playing football and lacrosse games, going to football games, the ridiculous 6 AM football workouts we did in the middle of winter, spending time at the Jersey Shore, going skiing once (he was a terrible skier), and the occasional jiu jitsu workout he talked me into (which were impossible). Also, one of my favorite years of college was my sophomore year because Billy and our friends Mac and Nic all lived in Philadelphia then for a company they were working on, and as a student at nearby Haverford College I got to see them frequently. I have a lot of great memories with Billy from that year in particular.

Billy's story over the last year has, of course, been a popular one with news outlets. After hearing the recent news of his guilty plea, I searched for stories (as I'm sure most did) and read what many of those outlets had to say. Unsurprisingly, the tone of most of those stories is schadenfreude, and the general sentiment seems to be that Billy is a crook who is getting what he deserves. Honestly, if I didn't know Billy I think I would view the situation similarly. But I don't know anyone that actually knows Billy that feels this way. As you can imagine, I have talked to many mutual friends about the news over the last several weeks... and I think the best way to summarize our feelings is a deep sense of sadness. My parents were crushed upon hearing the news. My mom still works at the high school Billy and I attended and has talked to several faculty and said they were all crushed as well (our old football coach in particular). To me, and I'm sure many of them as well, Billy is an inherently bright and kind individual who just lost his way of late... I hope this letter helps explain why I feel that way.

I always notice how my mom reacts when she sees my friends. She is always very welcoming but the reactions range on a scale from genuine to formality, and having seen this ritual enough times I like to think I have a pretty good read on that scale. I tend to view these interactions as ten second character tests, if you will. Usually, the good friends are on the genuine side of the scale and vice versa. My mom's reaction when she sees Billy are about as

high on the genuine scale as you can get. Billy is very charming and he has a hugely infectious smile. Although I will admit that there was occasionally some mischief behind that smile...

I remember one night when we were in high school driving through Summit, NJ with Billy when we pulled up to a car that was stuck in the middle of the road. This was right near a relatively busy intersection and everyone was zipping by the car and the two people attempting to push it out of harm's way. I wasn't quite sure what we should do, but Billy was... he wanted to help, so we did. The job was much easier with four people than it was with two and we were quickly able to get the car to the nearest lot. I haven't forgotten the look on the faces of those two people after and how grateful they were, and I'm sure he hasn't either.

That story is a good metaphor for Billy I think... he is there when you need him. I don't see him as much anymore as I used to, but I know if I was in trouble or needed something he would be there. That is one of the reasons I wanted to write this letter... I know he would do it for me. Despite everything he's been through recently, I still refer to him as a good friend of mine and I will continue to say that going forward. Some people have looked at me funny when I have said that recently (as if that statement makes them question everything they know about my judgment) but I feel comfortable saying it because I know what type of person he is underneath. I don't believe that Billy's intentions in any of his endeavors have ever been malicious. His worst quality, in my opinion, is not that he is immoral or the like... it is that he is ambitious and wanted to do things that hadn't been done before. I think he got in over his head recently with some of his ventures and didn't know how to get out, and perhaps there was a degree of naivety that played into things as well. For these reasons, I ask that you consider leniency in Billy's sentencing. I know that with the right guidance, he will contribute a lot of favorable things to this world. Despite his troubles, he is a good kid with a good heart, and I truly believe that from the bottom of my own.

Sincerely,  
Chris Christensen  
Friend

Judge Buchwald,

My name is Gavin Clarke. I was previously the doorman at [REDACTED] where Billy previously resided. My former co-workers mentioned they were writing letters in support of Billy, and I believe I have seen Billy in unique circumstances that you may find beneficial.

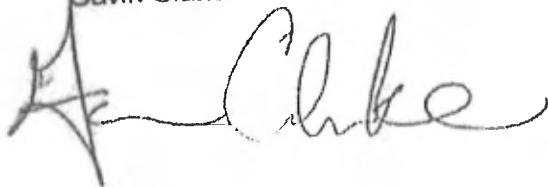
Billy was a respectful resident who constantly went out of his way to take care of others, but my favorite story about Billy is the friendship he formed with a homeless man nicknamed Voice.

Billy was on a first name basis with a handful of homeless people who lived on 14th street. He would do the usual - bring them dinner, ice cream in the summer, coffee in the winter, etc. However, he formed a close relationship with a name who Billy nicknamed Voice, for his penchant for serenading people on the street. Billy hired Voice to sing and perform at his company Magnises' events (which he would also invite the other doormen and me to).

After becoming close with Voice, Billy did whatever he could to help him. He would bring Voice to the building to shower in Billy's apartment. Billy eventually learned that Voice was applying for a job. Billy helped him write his resume and provided a letter of recommendation to the employer. Billy also promised Voice that he would double any paycheck he earned for the first few months of a new job. Needless to say, Voice got hired, and I distinctively remember the moment Voice came to the lobby with a beaming smile, holding his pay stub, looking for Billy. Billy of course came through, and this process repeated every two weeks for a few months.

Your Honor Billy is a caring person who did these acts without telling anyone. From where I come from, I've seen a lot of bad people go to prison. I don't understand how a person like Billy could ever be considered a bad person for how much good he has done.

Gavin Clarke

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Clarke', with a stylized, cursive script.

Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald,

I am writing to share with you my experiences of Billy McFarland. I first met Billy in our early teens on an internet forum for discussing web hosting (in lay terms we helped people get their websites on the internet). It seemed perfectly normal that the two of us would be running small businesses; we operated so professionally that we held our own against adults who had been in the business for years. We discussed entrepreneurship and the businesses we would run when we were older (we'd operate a datacenter).

The first year I met Billy, a security hole in the software I used resulted in hackers filling up my server with a huge amount of pornographic content and the datacenter I was using threatened to stop working with me (this would have ended my business). It was Billy who smoothed things over, helped me clean things up and get back online. It's that incident that cemented and set the tone for our friendship and future business relationship - Billy was brilliant at solving problems and making things happen.

It was Billy who founded a startup in 2011, who managed to get us into a startup incubator (Dreamit), more competitive than most ivy leagues and who raised money before anyone else in our startup incubator (at the time we were some of the youngest people to ever raise venture capital money). We employed some fantastic people and successfully brought a product to market.

On the human side of things it was Billy who was waiting at the airport when I landed in America as a nineteen year old travelling abroad from England for the first time ever on my own; it was Billy who consistently invited me to glamorous parties and introduced me to his friends despite my quite impressive awkwardness and general uncoolness - I never remember him flinching at my social incompetence or showing any sense of embarrassment - and Billy who invited me to his parents for my first ever thanksgiving.

Billy and I haven't spoken in a while; having a startup fail is an emotionally gruelling experience, but I look back with pride at what we did and know that meeting Billy in my formative years has played a huge role in my development both professionally and personally. His sense of vision, self-confidence and ability to deliver way beyond his years inspires me while his kindness to people of any station or walk of life leaves an enduring fondness.

Henry Clifford

[REDACTED]

**RUDY CLINE-THOMAS**

[REDACTED]

New York, NY [REDACTED]

05/01/18


Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald:

I am writing on behalf of Billy McFarland, who I met several years ago when I was vetting his company as a potential investor. Ultimately, I chose not to invest in his business, but during the process I develop a friendship with him that lasts to this day. Billy is an earnest, hardworking and intelligent young man. Throughout our friendship, I have watched him treat those around him respect and kindness.

He made some poor business decisions and got way ahead of himself in trying to create something he had no experience in. But in no way, did he have malicious intent. I know he is remorseful and is learning from his mistakes. I ask that you provide leniency in your ruling.

Sincerely,



Rudy Cline-Thomas



To the Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald,

I met Billy in 9th grade, when we were both entering our freshman years of high school. I attended high school with him for three years, worked with him for two years, and have been a close friend for twelve years. Billy is one of my closest friends, and one which I respect in many ways. As you will read below, Billy has played an important role in my life, he has been a loyal and inspirational friend to me over those twelve years, and I hope the few stories I share today can help convey his character.

One notable characteristic that Billy possesses is an ability to inspire others. Billy has always had a wide range of passions, and I've always been impressed by his ability to cultivate these passions in others. Sometime around my sophomore year of high school, Billy took up Brazilian jiu-jitsu (admittedly, my knowledge of mixed martial arts nomenclature is minimal). I recall him telling me how he would head down to Union City for training, and how he was frequently out of place, as most of his peers were substantially older (many were more than twice his age) and larger than him. Despite this, he still was able to befriend a diverse group of his peers, who ranged from firefighters to lawyers to full time MMA professionals. Our friend group was quite intrigued by this obscure sport that Billy had somehow stumbled upon and consequently introduced to us. Within a few weeks, Billy was leading a group of students (and one 300+ pound football coach, who was typically Billy's sparring partner) in MMA instruction and practice. The leadership he displayed there would become a recurring theme in his life, and something I always admired. Over time, the group increased in size and tradition continued, and to this day I can still remember a handful of moves that Billy introduced me to.

Perhaps more importantly, at least as it pertains to my career trajectory, was the pivotal role that Billy played in cultivating my passion for technology. During my senior year of high school, Billy approached me about starting a software company. I always knew that Billy had a background in technology; throughout high school he had worked independently designing, hosting, and managing websites and other internet applications. I, on the other hand, had essentially zero background in technology. Despite this, Billy brought me in, along with another high school friend of mine, and we all started an internet company that would be called Spling. As the company progressed from an idea into a reality, we were faced with an important decision. I had been accepted into the University of Pennsylvania and had planned on attending college the following year. Simultaneously, our fledgling company had been accepted into an accelerator program called DreamIt (<http://www.dreamit.com/>), a three month boot camp that provided founders with a variety of technology resources to help build a company. Much to my parents' chagrin at the time, the three of us decided to forego our academic opportunities to work on Spling. Billy was a natural leader, and over the next eighteen months taught me different aspects of organizational management, product management, agile software development, and far more. Aside from my own professional development, Billy also led the company. As our team grew I got to watch Billy navigate a wide range of growing pains. For example, Billy helped to ensure the CTO had the proper resources and legal counsel to allow him to immigrate to the U.S. (Billy also volunteered to be his roommate and always went the extra mile to make sure he wasn't alienated as a foreigner in a new country.) Today, internet technology is one of my core passions. I work for a venture capital firm, I read tech news religiously, and it's generally what gets me excited. Had it not been for Billy, none of this could have happened.



It's also worth noting how remarkably consistent Billy has been over the course of our friendship. Whether its interacting with a 35-year-old fireman in his gym or a close friend, Billy has always demonstrated the same personableness, loyalty, kindness, and that innate ability to inspire others.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mac Cordrey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mac" and last name "Cordrey" clearly distinguishable.

Mac Cordrey

Amanda Creedon

Brooklyn, NY

May 1, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St  
New York, NY

Re: Character Reference for Billy McFarland

Your Honor,

I met Billy in February 2015. He was the CEO of Magnises and I was interviewing for a job as the Director of Customer Experience. The company had launched the year before and he was starting to expand the team. An employee at the company put me in touch, and Billy agreed to a meeting. I showed up and we had a short but pointed conversation about what my experience was, what I thought I could do in the role, and what he thought the company needed. We went back and forth about luxury brands and how to deliver an elevated experience to millennials. He was genuinely passionate and enthusiastic. I could tell he really cared about the experience.

At the end of our meeting, he offered me the job. Just like that. He took a chance on me because of one meeting, and the word of another employee. It was really a little too surreal. Before I had a chance to email him a 'thank you for interviewing me' email, he had emailed me to tell me how excited he was to start working with me. Once Billy got excited, it seemed like he was a force. And Billy was always kind of excited! I met the rest of the team in March, and started the job in April.

In my 2 years of working with Billy, he was genuinely thoughtful, fun and generous. I remember in my first month of work, the team travelled to D.C. to launch Magnises in our second city. The day after the launch party, about 14 of us went to brunch before heading back to NYC. At the end of our meal when the waiter came to clear our plates, Billy told him to pack all of the food to go. Then he told us he had noticed there were a few homeless people in the area and they might want the food. It was such a sweet gesture and over the next few years of working with Billy, I saw that generosity time and time again.

Billy donated new laptops to an entire class of grade school students. And had follow up meetings with the class where he taught them about technology and business.

At different times, a couple of employees at the company had immediate family get sick. Without question, Billy gave them all the time off they needed and never once questioned when they would be back or what work they could do while away. He didn't

stop paying them. When one employee decided to leave to spend time with family, Billy assured them their job would always be there. In my experience, Billy has always been extremely loyal to his staff. He did everything possible to do right by the people he cared about. And almost more importantly, he trusted us. I remember the first time I had a question about our advertising strategy he told me to join the meeting with the outsourced social media advertising team to talk out my ideas. I was totally blown away by this. Having come from the corporate world, the open attitude to sharing and trying new ideas was refreshing.

I learned that Billy was extremely open to any idea as long as you had a loose plan and a rock solid reason for wanting to try it out. As any employee of a company, there were times I thought his trust was unwarranted with some of my colleagues, but that goes back to Billy's loyalty. He was a firm believer in second chances. He always took the time to hear every side of the story. When it came to people, he never made decisions lightly and always erred on the side of forgiveness.

Billy was always 'on'. He juggled a lot of different projects and ideas. I am not sure he ever stopped thinking about business. I have never seen a work ethic like Billy has. It was always pretty inspiring. I loved working with him, for him, around him because he was always encouraging me to take ideas to the next level because that's how he operates. He brought everyone's energy and excitement to the next level, too.

Despite the 'luxury' business space we were in, Billy was never snobby. He treated everyone equally. When I started working at Magnises, I was really surprised at how different he was to the way he was portrayed in all of the press I read about him, and Magnises. Although we were an 'exclusive' membership club, Billy wasn't overly interested in status, he was more focused on people's talent and their ideas.

I am writing this letter in support of Billy McFarland because I consider him to be a good, well intentioned person with big ideas. I appreciate everything he taught me and I value the two years I spent working for him.

Regards,  
Amanda Creedon

Dear Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

My name is Thomas Donato and I graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a degree in broadcast journalism and minor in kinesiology before moving back to New York City in 2016. I've had the pleasure of working with Billy McFarland for the past year as an independent contractor. Before working for Billy I was having a hard time finding work in the city but I was a Magnises member which is when we first met. During my time as a member I had the opportunity of becoming friends with a few employees of the company and was eventually introduced to Billy. Shortly after this Billy was in the middle of finding a company that would hire all of his employees and also retain their current salaries which he successfully negotiated with a company called Ollie.

The reason I bring this up is because to me this shows a lot about his character as a person and as a business owner. Billy didn't need to find another company for his team, but he took the time in the middle of his life falling apart to help out the people who were there with him from the beginning.

He also did this with me, when I first started working with Billy he was in the middle of moving and was not doing well at the time financially, but he took a chance on me when no one else would and gave me a much needed income to help keep me off the streets. Not only did Billy give me an income he also taught me how to grow companies from the bottom up and provided me with opportunities to use the skills I learned and go apply them for other startups as a contractor.

I have dozens of stories I can tell you about Billy putting the needs of others above his own and as a friend I would ask that Billy be given a chance to make things right and allow him to do what he does best which is being the caring, compassionate and innovative leader that he is. Billy is one of hardest working and most caring individuals I've ever had the pleasure of knowing and I know if given a second chance he will one make the most of it and exceed everyone's expectations.

Sincerely,

Thomas Donato

4/27/2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St, New York , New York

Your Honor:

I am writing to urge leniency in the sentencing of my friend Billy McFarland.

I have known Billy for more than 7 yrs, since we trained Brazilian Jiu Jitsu together in Union NJ. He and I are aware of the gravity of the crime he was convicted of, but its still hard to wrap my head around. This is not the man I know, and I'd like to give you a perspective that shows that he is more than the sum of his actions for the crime committed.

Billy has always been a role model for my son, now 18 yrs old. Billy was always one of the 1<sup>st</sup> people in class and one of the last ones to leave. His work ethic and dedication was second to none and that is why I think my son was drawn to him. He was more like a big brother always willing to take time out of his day to guide, show the younger students how to be respectful, demonstrated good character, and integrity.

I can confirm that in all the time I have known him, Billy McFarland has been a reliable, trustworthy and decent person. I just hope that you will give an opportunity for a second chance to Billy.

I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Raul Echevarria

[REDACTED]

Easton PA [REDACTED]

Tyrone Elijah

Union, NJ

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

My name is Tyrone Elijah and I am a martial-art (Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu) instructor with over twenty years of teaching experience. I am writing this letter in support of one of my former students, William McFarland ("Billy").

Billy came to my school when he was fifteen. He acted very mature for his age. As Billy developed his skills and became one of the stronger students in the class, he stayed very respectful to the others. Billy would often stay after class to help the less experienced students learn. He also became a good role model for my younger students. Often what happens with teenagers is that when they get their licenses, they stop focusing on training and stop regularly attending classes. Not Billy. He remained focused on training and stayed away from trouble. He attended class regularly and was focused on long-term gains instead of short cuts. His work ethic was some of the highest I have ever seen. Even in the most grueling training sessions, he kept his positive mental attitude and pushed through.

One summer, Billy and I travelled to Brazil to study the art straight from the source. Even in Brazil, where it is easy for a young teenager to get in trouble by misbehaving, he acted mature and stayed focused on training.

Billy is a really good kid. I'm glad that he came to train at my school. He was a pleasure to teach and I wish I had more teens like him. Based on what I saw of Billy in the years he trained at my school, I know that he is a good person with a promising future. I hope that his sentence is lenient because I know that if given the chance, Billy will do great things.

/S/ Tyrone Elijah



Eremenko Anastasia

[REDACTED]

New York

NY [REDACTED]

05/07/2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York  
10007

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

I'm writing this character reference letter in regard to William (Billy) McFarland. I have only known Billy since February 2018 but, in the short time I have known him we have become very close, and he has had an extremely positive impact on my life. I could not be happier that I met him and we have become very close friends.

I moved from Russia to the United States when I was 16. I attended Goldey Beacom College in Wilmington, Delaware. After completing my MBA degree I was, by chance, scouted by a modeling agency and moved to NYC to pursue modeling career. Luckily, I have had some success along this path and, continue to work regularly in NYC, LA and Europe. In addition to modeling I'm involved in research and marketing for some web based companies (Mable - an environmentally friendly toothbrush composed of bamboo, and Hay Straws a non-plastic drinking straw). On my family visits to Russia I volunteer my time to assist in the accounting at pet shelters,

as well as help my mother, who is also involved with a number of charities.

I first met Billy McFarland in February this year at a social event, and discovering we share similar interests and passions, we have been very close ever since. Upon meeting Billy I have never felt as comfortable with someone so early in a friendship. I couldn't believe how quickly we connected. It felt like we had known each other for years. In the subsequent meetings and conversations after that first coffee it didn't take long for me to realize how special he was, and how deeply and easily connected we'd become. He truly is a kind and compassionate person. Billy is different from anyone I've ever met. His generosity to anyone in need help, his intelligence, his support for friends as well as passers by, he is attentive, and an wonderful communicator. He cares so much about anyone who he meets along the way. Many times when we were walking by homeless people he would just run in store and buy some food for them; his compassion has no bounds. As close friends, he is amazingly supportive of me, always there to listen and help in any way he can. He is the most inspiring and motivating person I have ever met aside from my mother.

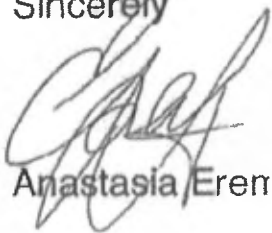
With regard to the Fyre Fest incident, we have discussed it many times, and of course he has expressed how terrible he feels about what happen and is consumed by trying to come up with a plan to make up for it. Being someone who spends almost every day with Billy, I can tell without doubt, that he never tried to harm anyone. He is committed to do so much more in the future and bring only positive things to those around him.

In the past few of months I've met many of Billy's closest friends and coworkers. All of them share the same feelings

about Billy, that he is a kind, hardworking person that puts everyone else's needs first. That he is focused on making things better for those he knows, and those in his community. Since coming to the United States as a young woman, I have encountered many situations that young women sadly have to deal with in today's social climate. I never met a man who respects and values the opinions of women as much as he does, and that's really important nowadays. The way he listens and truly understands others, the way he motivates and lifts me up from any situation, and the way he respects me and cares about me shows how caring of a person he is.

Billy, for me, is a great example of how people should be. No one is without flaws, he has made mistakes and he takes responsibility for those mistakes. It breaks his heart that things went wrong but he is doing his best to make up for it. Not a day goes by that he isn't trying to find a way to make things better.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anastasia Erenenko', written over the printed name.

Anastasia Erenenko

Gregory S. Gianis

Nashville TN,

April 16, 2018

Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor Daniel Patrick Moynihan  
Federal Court House  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY Courtroom 21 A  
Re: Billy McFarland

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am Greg Gianis and I am an MBA student at Vanderbilt University in Nashville TN. Before attending business school, I was employed by Treasury Partners in Manhattan. I have had the privilege of knowing Billy McFarland since we were 12 years old. I first got to know Billy when we went to the same school in middle school. We learned that our grandparents were related and had emigrated from Greece together. We quickly formed a friendship that has lasted more than 15 years.

From a young age Billy stood out. As a middle-schooler he was already a hard-working, ambitious student with extreme prowess in computer science. Like many teenagers, Billy had big ideas. The difference between Billy and other people was that he could turn these ideas into reality.

As uniquely intelligent and driven as Billy was, he was not a selfish person but a supportive friend. As a student if I struggled with a class I could always count on Billy to help. Billy was not the type of person who would give me the answer, instead he would challenge me and teach me so that I would understand the concepts for the long run. As we got older, I continued to see Billy's kindness and generosity through small acts, like how in New York City he would always take extra food and utensils with him to share if he ran into a person in need on the street.

Billy and I both attended Bucknell University, he a year behind me. I was unsurprised to see him continue to succeed in that arena, winning first place in the Keystone Innovation Zone Business Venture Plan Competition his freshman year for a business idea he had conceived of called Spling.com. This award was a mixed blessing though, because with it came encouragement from mentors in the tech and venture capital world to drop out of college. Billy was convinced that he would learn more in a real-world business setting than he would in undergraduate college classes. His ambition pushed him not to wait three more years to begin his career but to continue forward, turning his ideas into reality without delay. At the time, it seemed like a bold, enterprising move, but in hindsight, his decision to leave college may have cost Billy the opportunity to learn certain other lessons that could have been vital to his career and to avoiding the situation in which he finds himself today.

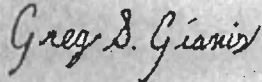
Billy has conveyed to me that he understands the seriousness of the acts he has committed and is deeply remorseful. When we recently spoke, it was apparent that he truly regrets the mistakes that he has made. The actions he took while organizing Fyre Festival are not the types of actions I have known Billy to engage in. These were anomalies and are not indicative of the person that Billy is today or aspires to be in the future. Billy's actions have hurt not only his career and his future but also his family and his friends and I know that Billy will do whatever it takes to redeem himself in their eyes.



Recently while doing a case study on FedEx and its founder Fred Smith I was reminded of the huge gambles that people often take in business. In 1971 FedEx was in such dire conditions the company had just \$5,000 in the bank, and no way to pay its expenses for the following week. Fred Smith took that \$5,000 to Las Vegas on a Friday to gamble and returned to the FedEx headquarters on Monday morning with \$31,000, enough to save the company. People in the startup community tell stories like this far too often. People in the startup community forget to tell you about the desperate gambles people make every day that do not work out or may even cross the line into criminality. I have no doubt that Billy began his endeavor with only the best intentions. However, he crossed a line and for that he has and will continue to pay a steep price.

Judge Buchwald, I humbly ask that you take into consideration the type of person Billy is and his future potential when making your decision. I know how badly Billy wants to make amends for his mistakes. I truly believe that he has so much to offer society and I hope that I will one day be able to see him accomplish what I know he is capable of. If there is a person who will overcome this, that person is Billy McFarland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Greg D. Gianis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Greg Gianis

WILLIAM GRAY

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York

Dear Judge Buchwald:

I have known Billy McFarland for a decade. I met him through the daughter of a close friend.

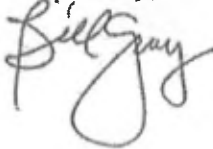
I was immediately impressed with him on a personal level. He was open, friendly and polite. He was also curious. He was far from self-centered. I quickly learned of his own early success having created and sold his software business to Microsoft at the age of 20 or less! He was then pursuing a digital music entrepreneurial idea. He readily admitted that his further college plans were on hold while he continued his entrepreneurial pursuits.

A few years later he got in touch with me seeking marketing advice on his Magnises idea. I was happy to help for free because I felt he had a lot on the ball and more importantly was full of ideas. I had reached a point of life where mentoring younger people was important and gratifying. Our contact was infrequent but always substantive. He always was seeking insight and help in areas he didn't know enough of on his own. He seemed to be at heart a creative person who was forever imagining big ideas. He wasn't afraid to shift direction if something more promising struck him.

Alas, I believe Billy was always well intentioned -- perhaps naive in his pursuit of creative ventures. But to me he was always forthright and earnest.

I am disheartened by his conviction and his immediate fate. I think he still has great promise and much to offer in life. My hope is that he will be viewed as such and ultimately given a second opportunity to live a productive life. I believe in Billy's essential goodness.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bill Gray", written in a cursive, flowing style.



To Whom It May Concern,

Billy and I met around the winter of 2015. At the time, I was working as a professional artist out of my own shop in Albany, NY. I lived with my father, in the Bronx and would make the 300 mile journey about 3-4 times a week until I could afford my own place upstate.

Before Billy and I had our first conversation, I was fighting to gain custody of my beautiful daughter, Evia, who was 4 years old at the time. In order to send money for her and make money for myself, I painted anything I could every day out of my shop. One thing I had gotten especially good at was painting fine art pieces of influential peoples. I was able to do artwork for Rob Gronkowski, Odell Beckham, and Kristaps Porzingis, which all became a factor when we first met.

While on Facebook one December evening, I came across an ad post by a company named "Magniscs." They offered a giveaway for Super Bowl 50 tickets, a private jet to the game, and a chance to share the flight with former Super Bowl champions. In order to enter into the contest, all you needed to do was text the founder of the company, Billy McFarland.

I'm not usually one to enter into any lottery or contest of chance. But the ease of sending a text message instead of some long form was actually appealing. So I texted.

The first few texts came in asking if I'd be interested in certain experiences, art shows, and think tanks. I passed on all of them until I received a text offering a chance to meet multiple well known NFL athletes at a dinner that I'd need to purchase tickets to. Thinking about my ongoing success with the athletes I had captured already, I decided to make use of the opportunity and replied. What I got back wasn't expected. I believed I'd end up speaking with a bot or automated return system. What I got back was actual dialogue.

Realizing I was speaking with the owner, I decided to send my portfolio. Once he saw the photographs, Billy was very impressed.

Instead of paying for a ticket, I convinced him to keep a few of the signed pieces I'd make for the meeting and would turn it into a promotional outing for my artwork. Unfortunately, the meeting with the athletes was scheduled for the same day as a court date that I had for Evia in Albany. Even more fateful, due to an interstate case, our court appearance was delayed for hours. The hours that followed turned out to be the beginning of what would be a very interesting 3 year period.

Abruptly, during the court proceedings the Judge asked for time in his chambers with both attorneys. When they came out, the Judge granted me with custody of Evia right then and there. I didn't even have enough time to process my happiness before I had to jump in my car and head to the city to meet up with Billy.

Unable to make the first meeting with the athletes because of the delay, I agreed to meet up with Billy at a concert where Ja Rule and Ashanti were performing. We never got a chance to physically meet that day, as my phone died upon reaching the concert. Undeterred, I managed to get the artwork into the concert and to the artists myself, and also made it onto their social media platforms. When Billy saw my artwork through their social media, he called me the next day to arrange a meeting in his office. There he called Antonio Pierce of the New York Giants and told him my story. Afterward, Billy asked to manage me, explaining he'd never done so before.

Over the months that followed, Billy explained about ways he would use his marketing skills, network, and connections in the gallery world to help me grow as an artist. We spoke about painting pieces for various high profile clients, throwing gallery shows, and building my art brand from the ground up. We agreed to a set amount of financial compensation contractually, and I worked extremely hard to create and uphold my end as a creative. I painted multiple pieces for the Magnises office, for the Fyre Media brand, live at his coordinated dinners and even in Washington DC at one of his premiere events. He hosted my first professional art gallery showing and got it sponsored by Budweiser at the SoHo Grand Hotel. We both were just beginning our journey in business together, and still Billy went above and beyond to help me take care of Evia in the months after I had gained custody. He even helped to market an art show for my high school buddy without hesitation.

During my art show at the SoHo Grand, Billy pulled me to the side and informed me that his mentor had passed away in a crazy accident. Things got a bit erratic afterwards, but even through it all Billy helped me with a down payment on a rental upstate in an effort to help me create in a setting less affected by the push and pull of his company.

Billy McFarland is a complex individual. There are things about him that I will never know, like most people. and like most people, I can only make my deductions based of what I have experienced with them. As long as I've been around Billy, he's always made sure to put his people first. I work for myself, so I understand the feeling of having to do whatever it takes to produce. I also understand what it's like to be young and make mistakes based off good intentions. Billy's a great guy, who has a ton to offer if given the second chance to do so. I really do see him as a friend, regardless of what he has or doesn't, and I sincerely wish him and all the people involved the best possible outcomes.

Thank You,  
Kindo Harper

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St. NY New York

Letter of Recommendation:

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald:

Hope all is well. My name is Thomas Johnson and I run a startup Health & Fitness Coaching, GetUpNGetFit LLC. I started working with Billy McFarland November of 2016. When we first started working together I'll admit he was very inconsistent with his workouts and lacked discipline. However, his work ethic towards his companies and projects was incredible. Seeing how much work he had on his plate and how he managed it all was fascinating to me, especially knowing that he was only 24 years old at the time. This is something that I respected about him and is also the reason why I decided to stick around. I believed that he had the ability to focus that same work ethic towards his training and health. I was not wrong, at all.

As our relationship grew he mentioned that he was working on a huge project, Fyre Festival. Often, we had to postpone his sessions because he was out in the Bahamas, prepping for what was supposed to be the biggest festival of the year. I was excited for him and became even more excited when he asked me to come along. We agreed that I was going to host a field day event with obstacle courses.

I flew down for the Festival and nothing went as planned. There was a storm the night before that ruined majority of the tents. The crew that they had were not well staffed nor did they have a plan B. The first few hours upon my arrival the Fyre crew were trying to figure out lodging situation for the guests. I also didn't have a place to stay but I understood the situation and kept a calm demeanor, unlike the other guests. I was in the same situation as them but I knew the Fyre crew was trying their best to take care of everything. They provided food and water at the tents that were still standing. I stood in line and choose the chicken, veggies and rice plate with water of which I was grateful for.

When I was finally able to link up with Billy he looked horrible. His shirt was soaked with sweat, and his face was dirty. Everyone was calling his name left and right, he was stressed out. I had to pull him aside and make him do a brief controlled breathing meditation exercise to calm him down.

The Fyre festival was clearly a disaster, that's a fact. Billy made some horrible decisions and mistakes, that's a fact; but one thing that I believe in is there is no losing situation, you either win or learn from your experiences. I believe Billy has learned from this Fyre festival incident as well as other previous bad decisions.

I say this because I've seen him mature and transform both mentally and physically since the Fyre Festival incident. He's more discipline and conscientious of his actions. He's learned from

his mistakes and continues to learn and seek ways to improve himself. This is a person, if given the opportunity can make a real difference for the good, in this world. As his Coach and Mentor I believe this and believe in him.

Sincerely,

Thomas Johnson Jr. (TJ)

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I humbly write this letter as a friend and supporter of Billy McFarland. I first met Billy about four years ago when I became a member of one of his startups : Magnises. The goal of Magnises was to democratise meaningful experiences for the masses, specifically millennials and recent college graduates. After using Magnises's concierge service for several things, including dinner reservations and car service appointments, Billy invited me to sit down and discuss what I wanted to get out of my membership. At the time, Magnises had a 'clubhouse' of sorts in the east village at the Hotel on Rivington. I arrived right on time and Billy immediately closed his laptop and walked me into a private room, picking my brain and listening attentively the entire way. "I'm thinking of launching a new product – a new tier of membership. Should I call it Magnises+ or MagnisesX ?" he asked. We ended up naming it Magnises+.

Billy was and still is a visionary. Upon joining Magnises I never would have imagined the great experiences my membership made possible. From discounted tickets to the first UFC event ever hosted in New York City (Magnises had a relationship with Madison Square Garden) to shared summer weekend plane rides to the Hamptons in a fellow member's plane, Magnises went above and beyond to give members the value they expected from their membership. Billy created the company because he wanted to give millennials the 'black card' experience. And for three years, he did.

Through Magnises, I met some lifelong friends, including folks I travelled with to Art Basel Miami, to Ibiza over the summer, and to the Forbes Under 30 Summit. If I ever had feedback about or a request for the Magnises service, Billy was a quick phone call or text away. He was always fair, a good listener, and quick to action on any feedback. But more importantly, Billy became a friend. He would come to the events his company planned and sponsored, and mingle with attendees. Billy was always a very involved and hands-on CEO. He cared about the people who trusted in and used his product.

We stayed friends even after he moved to focus on the Fyre Festival full-time. He put his heart and soul into Fyre, hiring hundreds of employees and moving down to the Bahamas basically full-time to plan and setup the festival. Like he did with members of Magnises, Billy's goal with Fyre was to show people a good time. Not everything goes according to plan, and Billy owned up to that. The day the festival was cancelled, he gave a statement saying sorry, and that he was committed to making things right. Since then, Billy has cooperated. He feels remorse. I'm in no way defending his actions – they were wrong – but I'm confident that Billy acted out of character during a time of extreme stress and pressure to deliver on a large-scale event, the likes of which had never before been done and his behavior in early 2017 does not reflect him as a person. Billy is intelligent, motivated, hard-working, and most importantly a good friend. In the four years I've known Billy, he's always done right by me.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'CK' or 'C.K.', written in a cursive, stylized manner.

Christopher Khan



Dear Judge Buckwald,

I am an events professional who has spent the past 25 years helping top brands, foundations, and individuals market themselves, primarily through live events and experiential campaigns. I was featured on the front page of the Wall Street Journal as America's first "corporate concierge" for groundbreaking work at PepsiCo, and I've worked with clients such as Disney, ABC Television, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, ING, Victoria's Secret, InStyle Magazine, Vogue, Vanity Fair, Armani, Cole Haan, The Rolling Stones, and Paris Hilton.

For the past five years, I have been somewhat of a professional mentor to Billy. I've watched him grow, learn, and yes, stumble a bit—all the milestones that fervent twenty-somethings with big ideas experience.

I have been there, by Billy's side throughout some of his wins and some of his losses. I have watched and helped as he put on hundreds of successful Magnises events. Often, against all odds, Billy pulled through on incredible experiences time and time again for Magnises members. He has an incredible ability to see what people want, dream of an experience, and then deliver results.

Billy took this same passion towards his conception of the Fyre Festival. When things got tough, Billy immediately called me for help. So, I put all of my work aside and moved to Exuma to work for the Fyre Festival. We gave it everything we had. We worked 20 hour days for months straight. We thought we were going to pull it off. We thought we had it—even when a storm came the night before and a water pipe burst, destroying our entire system the morning of the festival—we thought we could still deliver. We didn't, obviously, but the mess here was bigger than Billy.

What matters, too, is Billy before Fyre. He was known for delivering results and caring about people. I have witnessed this directly. Moreover, Billy is the one person I know that calls people from so many different backgrounds his best friends. He is a good citizen, a caring young man and he has a heart for others.


From someone who has seen the ins and outs of this business for 25+ years, please Your Honor, give Billy a chance to do good with his time. He has learned a hard lesson and he will pay the penalty for this for years to come, but it should not be in jail. Please look beyond this event and into the path that brought this young man before you. He is not a criminal. He made a mistake.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Andy King

Andy King  
Founder, Inward Point



**RYAN LESLIE**

New York, NY

Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald:

My name is Ryan Leslie. I am a Grammy Nominated recording artist and technology CEO. I've had the privilege of headlining several events including festivals, benefit concerts and tours here and abroad. I've also spoken at NYU, Wharton, and UC Berkeley, and I've been fortunate in receiving Technology Trailblazer and Global Hip Hop awards. My music and business career have allowed me to interact with some of the most diverse business people, entrepreneurs, artists, and humanitarians around the world. I have valued each of these interactions and relationships.

Billy McFarland is one of these people. He is, without question, one of the most genuine, thoughtful, compassionate, and innovative people I've encountered. I also view him to be one of the most promising young entrepreneurs likely to make a society-changing impact during his career.

My relationship with Billy spans across business, charity, and friendship.

I met Billy as he was building Magnises. I sought him out as I thought the marketing of the Magnises card was one of the more ingenious startup launch campaigns I had seen. However, what really shocked me was seeing how Billy had a special way of connecting with and delivering value to thousands of his millennial customers. The Magnises group greatly respected Billy, and while Billy could have taken the super-star route that I so often saw in his industry, he cared about personally delivering an experience to every member. I specifically remember Billy insisting on calling every member one-on-one to see how he could provide more value to them. He locked himself in a room and did thousands of phone calls non-stop for almost 48 hours. This genuine compassion combined with his intuitive acumen led me to join Magnises' advisory board, where I helped guide Billy and did talks and concerts for his members.

Billy's ability to innovate and connect industries continued when he launched the Fyre Bookings app. Within three months of Billy coding the app, it was apparent that he was disrupting the music industry and creating massive waves. Billy had conceived and built an app providing value to artists and artist bookers which called into question the need for the old guard, who in many cases had become careless, antiquated middlemen. Billy's ability to navigate this arena was bold and uncharted.

Despite all this good, Billy was still young and by no means an expert. In my opinion, he outdid himself by announcing the Fyre Festival. Though the launch campaign was genius, the response and viral coefficient was larger than Billy could have imagined. Millions of people saw the Fyre Festival announcement and social media helped create a monster with which Billy could not keep pace. Having spent time with Billy, I can assure you that to my knowledge he did everything he could to execute the festival. He truly believed the best outcome for everyone was a successful and safe event. In the end, while safety was achieved, success escaped him and the organizers.

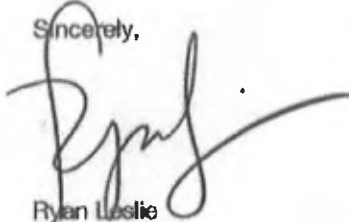
I know that while this experience has devastated Billy, he has been made a more resilient and improved version of himself. In August, after the festival failed, Billy called me and said, "I need you to do a keynote speech for a good cause." Without asking any questions, I said, "of course, where do I have to be?" An hour later, Billy and I were at the United Nations planning a successful event: headlining United Nations World Humanitarian Day in Times Square.

When the UN needed help at the last minute, even in the midst of the Fyre failure, they called Billy and he delivered. Though this may sound unbelievable - to me, this is a small example of the good that Billy aims to create by leveraging his resources and relationships.

Going forward, I would advocate extending Billy the opportunity to provide value to the world and restitution to his investors. Given this opportunity, I firmly believe he will deliver and I commit to be in his corner, guiding and mentoring where applicable with what I have learned in my life and career.

I believe we live in a world that needs young entrepreneurs like Billy who are undeterred from taking measured risk in this economy. It is my great hope that you are able to come to a fair verdict that accounts for —and reflects — the record of Billy's larger history, his compassion for people, and his fervor for big ideas. I remain available at any time should you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Leslie", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Ryan Leslie  
CEO, SuperPhone

Katherine Liakas

Long Branch, New Jersey

May 3, 2018

The Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald

500 Pearl Street

New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Buchwald:

My name is Katherine Liakas and I am a family friend and former group leader of Mr. William McFarland. I felt it was important to share my views, knowledge and opinions regarding the character of this individual.

My experience with Billy McFarland began in the summer of 2009. Billy traveled as a member of a mission team from Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church located at 250 Gallows Hill Road Westfield, New Jersey to Tijuana, Mexico. Our group stayed at Saint Innocents Orphanage where we adhered to a strict schedule that started with early morning prayers in their tiny chapel, alongside the orphans that lived there. Immediately after mass we would caravan to a remote village where it had been arranged for us to build a small one room structure which would become the "home" of a family who before then had survived outside in the hot, dry Mexican climate. During the winter months and rainy season, they battled all types of adverse climates for survival. I describe this reality because it was such a very different life experience than any of us could imagine, including Billy.

I can honestly say in my many years leading these mission trips, Billy McFarland immediately stood out as a leader and my "go to guy" on many levels. He understood direction and he was extremely conscientious. During the construction he worked diligently despite the arduous conditions. With the intense heat, the long hours, small food portions, rugged sleeping conditions and bucket showers, everyone was inevitably frustrated and at their limit. On one unusually difficult day, we returned to our work van and discovered it had been stolen. Billy remained calm and provided strength as I gathered my thoughts. Together we established a plan for our team's safe return to the orphanage that evening. Billy was always unselfish, caring and compassionate. In fact, Billy was the first one to offer himself for whatever chore presented. His tireless energy was evident at the end of each long workday. When we returned to our camp, Billy would engage with the orphan children by playing a game of soccer or tag. It was his generous spirit that captured all of our hearts. Billy is the type of person whom everyone wants to associate with because his energy and kindness is infectious.

In summation, I feel confident in this young man's future because I know with certainty that Billy McFarland is a wonderful human being who has been blessed with many talents and he aspires to do great things for others.

*Katherine Liakas*

Gianni Martire  
[REDACTED]  
New York, NY [REDACTED]

May 4, 2018

Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald  
United States District Court  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Buchwald,

My name is Gianni Martire. I have been a tech entrepreneur for fifteen (15) years, and have known Billy McFarland since he was nineteen (19) years old. As for my background, I have founded three (3) tech startups, with my last startup generating millions of dollars in annual revenue. I'm also a Y Combinator founder, and have angel invested in about thirty (30) early stage startups, four (4) of which have become Silicon Valley unicorns that have created thousands of jobs. I have also lectured at NYU's Stern School of Business in the area of tech startups. I am known for my track record of picking winning startups. I invested in Billy McFarland twice and would not think twice about investing in him again.

Billy was first introduced to me via a well-respected angel investor/bell labs engineer, John Ason. We thought Billy was a winner the moment we met him and we both invested in Billy's first tech startup, Spling. Even though Spling didn't end up being a financial success, I had a lot of confidence in Billy and told him that I wanted to give him his first check in his next startup venture. Over the years of backing Billy's start up ventures, I have never felt lied to or deceived. In fact, I have felt the exact opposite. Billy has always been upfront and honest with me about all of the ups and downs of his startup ventures. As entrepreneurs, our sense of self and self-worth is tied in what we create. To people like Billy, it's not a job, it's a mission.

Billy is one of the most hardworking, bright, and talented entrepreneurs that I have had the pleasure of meeting. Along with other investors, I have attended several of Billy's events over the years, which were successes. In my opinion, Billy's *forte* is in planning and hosting small one day events for small groups of people, not Woodstock level festivals. He is also an exceptional marketer and generates huge interest in his events. In fact, he marketed Frye Festival for only two (2) months, which was a very short amount of time for the turnout and massive amount of coverage it generated. Billy is seen as a thought leader in the influencer marketing space, he can literally write the book on it. If you were to ask me what I think went wrong with Frye Festival, I feel I can simply sum it up with a few facts. A super young twenty-five-year-old, with zero track record or experience of organizing an event of such scale or complexity, is not only going to try to pull this off in a few months vs. the years it traditionally takes, but he's also going to do this all on an uninhabited island with no infrastructure, and host thousands of people for several days. Frye was never a scam, Billy just bit off way too much. I think it's actually pretty impressive that he even got as far as he did. I feel by the time Billy realized he was in over his head, he felt that it was too late to retreat, panicked and the rest is history.

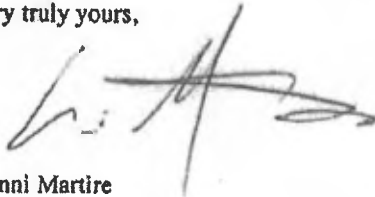


In the investor world, we are labeled as QIBs, "Qualified Institutional Buyers," meaning that the S.E.C. views us as sophisticated and savvy parties, who know how to conduct proper due diligence. Everyone who backed the Festival was well aware of Billy's age, lack of track record, and the civil engineering nightmare such a feat would be. When you add that on top of all the more ordinary risk factors and unrealistic timelines, how the investors didn't tap the breaks at the first pitch meeting, I honestly have no idea. I feel a lot of people, especially Billy, were simply naïve. Smart people make risky bets that don't pay off all the time, and it's always obvious why it went wrong in hindsight. I feel Frye Festival is no different than that. There was never any intent to defraud or scam anyone. I feel this was a one-time mistake by a young naïve entrepreneur, not a criminally planned ponzi or a Theranos where investors were told well planned and structured lies for years.

I know for a fact that Billy is very remorseful for what has occurred, and if given the opportunity, he would go back to make things right. When you have a flop like Frye, investors mainly want to recover as much capital as possible to mitigate the loss they have to take, not put the founder in jail. Billy is extremely bright and resourceful; the last six years of his life prove what he can do without a college degree. So when sentencing Mr. McFarland, I respectfully ask that this court not destroy the life of a young man, but rather grant him the opportunity to make restitution to his investors. In addition, perhaps as part of his restitution, Billy can spend his time lecturing at universities as he has a lot to teach. As a former business lecturer, I assure you, the students will hang on to his every word, and take away useful business skills and various lessons learned. Frye Festival will properly become the best case study for teaching values of logistics management. Turning this negative event into positive events is how I feel justice can be best served.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gianni Martire', with a stylized, flowing script.

Gianni Martire

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald

500 Pearl Street

New York, New York

Re: Billy McFarland

To the Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

Billy is happy when others around him are happy. He has an incredible ability to connect with people, understand them, and do whatever he can to make them comfortable and enjoy themselves. He has such a positive energy to him that it is easy to see how he is able to connect with people, whether they just met or are lifelong friends.

I have been lucky enough to be friends with Billy since he came to Pingry for high school. I have always been shy around new people, even when I was with my established friend group and new kids came to school. It was different when I met Billy. His energy, positivity, and selflessness made him stand out immediately as someone easy to connect with, and importantly, the type of person with which I wanted to connect.

He was different from other kids in high school, including myself. For many kids, things like apathy in the classroom or being mean to other kids were considered cool. Even as a new student, Billy quickly emerged as a leader and wasted no time using that status to change that dynamic. He worked hard in school and was engaging in the classroom and it made everyone around him want to be better. He was inclusive and friendly to everyone around him and it made him quickly stand out as a leader.

My favorite example of Billy as a leader and wanting to make others enjoy themselves is when he started taking Brazilian Jiu Jitsu after school. When we heard about this and joked about trying it out, he immediately sprung to action and set a plan in place to help us learn. He found a time that worked for everyone, found space in the school where he could teach us, made sure we had any equipment we needed, and developed a fun way to show us what he was learning. It started with just a couple of us and when others heard about it, he offered to teach anyone who wanted to learn. It quickly it turned into regular sessions in his free time during the school day teaching a big group of kids. In the way that only he can, he turned an activity that no one had ever heard of into something everyone wanted to be a part of in an inclusive way you do not often find in high school, bringing kids together in a fun way to build a special bond beyond our everyday friendships.

Only a few weeks into my first year at Duke and Billy's first year at Bucknell, he texted me that he had an idea for a company he wanted to start and that he wanted to talk to me about getting involved. I signed up before he told me what the idea was. When most people have big ideas, they do not get it done and make up excuses for it. When Billy gets ideas, he does everything he can to make it happen. This was a person with whom I wanted to be in business.

Over the next 2 years, Billy, Mac Cordrey, and I went on to build Spling. None of us had any experience building a business at the scale we were aiming for, but we were able to tackle each problem as it arose.

While Mac and I, along with the rest of the Spling team, worked hard, Billy was always the real engine. He had this amazing ability to think about the big picture and his vision for what we wanted to build as well as manage even the minutest details of the business. Billy carried himself with a level of confidence and composure that was well beyond his age. Although Spling did not work out, it was easy for me, and all the other incredible people we met and worked with along the way, to see that he had a gift.

As he went from a new kid in my high school, to a college dropout, to a revered businessman, and to a tabloid target, the thing that impressed me most was that he never strayed from who he was. His positivity, warmth, natural energy, and drive have never faded. Given a second chance, I have no doubt that Billy will continue to have a positive impact on all those around him. He has an incredible mind and an incredible heart. Billy has always been, and always will be, a role model for me in both my professional life and my personal life.

Best,

Nic Meiring

Samuel Miller

[REDACTED]  
New York, NY [REDACTED]

May 1, 2018

Hon. Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Hon. Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

I am writing you on behalf of my friend, Billy McFarland. I have known Billy for 13 years, dating from our introduction during our freshmen year of high school throughout our year spent together at Bucknell University to the present, during the course of which I have come to know him to be a kind, caring, and empathic friend.

I met Billy during high school preseason sports with him playing on the football team and myself on the soccer team. Billy and I are not exactly alike in terms of our personalities, with him being more extroverted and outgoing, whereas I am more so introverted. Naturally, this had lead to us hanging out in different social crowds. To put it bluntly, Billy was more so in with the popular crowd and I was not.

We were still able to find common interests in poker and our passion for the New York Jets. He has never cared that maybe I lacked some socially desirable qualities and traits that others may judge people on. Most importantly, he has always stood by and stuck up for me in situations where other people have not.

Billy has been a loyal and caring friend to me for more than a decade. It has been difficult for me to see his character being portrayed by the media in such a negative light because I personally know him to be someone completely different.

Your Honor, I would plead for leniency in the sentencing of my friend, Billy McFarland. I have seen firsthand that he has the qualities to make a meaningful and positive impact on our society.

Sincerely ,

*Samuel Miller*

Samuel Miller

May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018

Dear Judge Buckwald,

My name is Craig. I'm a master carpenter who lives in Exuma. I have spent time traveling the Bahamas Islands doing carpentry for many projects. I also did carpentry for music concerts.

I was hired to work for the Fyre Festival by one of the project managers. I worked on site building the structures for the bar and art areas. I knew who Billy was, but I hadn't met him when I first started working.

As he did with everyone, Billy came up to me individually one day, said I was doing good work, and asked if I wanted to get lunch with him. We took a ride to a local spot for a fast bite. The first meeting, I remembered, because Billy didn't ask me about work at all. He was asking about my family, my son, and my background.

We would later spend many nights setting up lights together so we could work through the night, but he genuinely cared about me and my family as people. He would send me home soon after dusk. This was something that no American businessman has ever done towards us.

To get ready for the festival, we did everything we could. We couldn't have worked harder. We were paid a lot until the week of the festival. I don't know how we could of worker harder.

After the festival, Billy stayed and made sure we were all ok. We even continued our relationship. I went to America in the summer after the festival for a family wedding that happened to be in New York. Billy allowed me to stay with him on his couch. When I was there, Billy. When I was there, Billy was down and out. The world was against him and he was suffering in his house. But that did stop him from showing hospitality towards me. He cooked for me and made his home my home, made me totally comfortable. Billy treated me like me like family when he didn't have to, he stayed by my side after everything happened.

Sincerely,

Craig Ian Nicholson



April 20, 2018

Bruce L. Paisner

New York, NY

The Honorable Naomi Reice Buchwald  
United States District Court  
Southern District of New York  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dear Judge Buchwald,


I am writing to say a word in support of Billy McFarland in connection with his sentencing on June 21st. I have had a business relationship with Billy for 8 or 9 years. In Billy's dealings with me he was always helpful and honorable, with, in my experience, an unusual ability to understand people and figure out ways to accommodate investor needs while building his businesses. In the course of our business dealings, he became a good friend and despite the difference in our ages I enjoyed his company a lot.

Clearly, and on many levels, what has happened to him is a tragedy. I believe he has a lot to offer the world, and he will not be able to do much sitting in a prison.

I am a lawyer by training and well aware of the severity of what he did. I was not an investor in his Fyre project and in fact I didn't know anything about it until after the fact. In the summer of 2016, I developed a very serious bacterial infection in my foot and leg and I spent the period from Labor Day until the end of December in Presbyterian hospital (and then January at Mary Manning Walsh, learning to walk again). I had several operations and was heavily sedated for much of the time. I wish I had been in good health during that period. I can't help believing that I might have talked Billy out of the Fyre venture entirely or at least stopped him from the acts he then committed to try to salvage it. But that didn't happen.

I can only tell you that in my many experiences dealing with Billy, I found him to be straightforward and honest in every way. Perhaps his early successes gave him overconfidence in his ability to manage a complex business venture. Despite all the press coverage, my view continues to be that Billy McFarland is an honorable person and will contribute much to society if he is given the chance. I hope you can take this and my experiences with him into account at the same time you apply the law to his sentencing.

Sincerely,

  
Bruce Paisner

April 15, 2018

Attn: Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York

Re: Billy McFarland

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

Please accept this letter as a genuine and honest description of my long time friend Billy McFarland. I have known Billy for over 6 years when he first moved to New York City. He has been a true friend ever since and to this day remains as one of the people who I trust and believe in.

Billy is a hard working entrepreneur who always strives for the best. As long as I've known him, he is always ready to help others and gives his outmost time and energy to anyone in need. He is a sincere friend, who I trust with my life. I have a lot of respect for Billy and everything he has done in his career and past. He has been very generous with many people I know, by giving them his time, energy, wisdom and his trust. He accepts others as they are and welcomes them to his life without hesitation.

Billy always brings the best out of others and manages to foster positive discussions whether its career goals, friendly advice or just a simple conversation about someone's life. He makes a big positive impact on others and makes the time to spend with them no matter what his circumstances are.


I have interacted with Billy on many different levels. Besides our friendship, I have seen him putting long hours into his work. He has never taken advantage of anyone's trust and always tries to bring the best out of people. He is Intelligent, polite and comes from a great family. Billy has also rented one of my New York City apartments in the past. He has always been respectful, reliable and dependable. He is that one person that I know I can call for advice and he will take the time to meet or help.

Billy is a driven young man who will without a doubt make a difference in other people's lives. I know he understands the severity of the situation he is in and it taught him many valuable lessons which he will always remember. I am positive that he will grow into a strong minded person and dedicate his time on improving himself and improving the lives of others around him.

I truly believe that Billy deserves a second chance as he has a remarkable character who can do so much in his life and others'. He is a person who I hold in the highest regard and I can personally vouchsafe for his character and personal standing.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at any time.

Sincerely,

  
Marina Popova  
CEO  
Marinium Group Corp.

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

I am writing to you to share with you my relationship with Billy McFarland. Prior to making a final sentence, I find it important to consider the following in order to have a holistic view of Billy's character.

I met Billy in 2015 in New York City. At the time Billy was working on Magnesis. The environments in which we would spend time were always collaborative, energetic, and forward thinking. At the time I had recently graduated from Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts and had come to New York City to apply what I had learned about entrepreneurship in the classroom to real life. There is a saying that you are who you surround yourself with-- and I believe that Billy's entrepreneurial spirit is intoxicating to those around him. Billy's creative out of the box thinking and tenacity are essential qualities that make others including myself have faith in his visionary.

On a more personal note, Billy has continued to show generosity and thoughtfulness to his friends. He is not a malicious person. I had joined on a trip to the Bahamas on a Magnesis trip. Billy was in attendance and had made sure all arrangements were made. There was not a moment where I felt unsafe, or any sense of deception. Billy was constantly mindful of the Magnesis guests and made sure we were beyond comfortable and happy.

I, myself had also gone to Fyre Festival with a few friends. Leading up to the festival, I had heard doubts from certain social circles in New York and hospitality professionals about the impending doom they felt was inevitable fate of the festival but I still had faith. Based on my experience of being around Billy and the team he was determined to execute on the festival. It was supposed to be revolutionary because it had never been done.

Upon arrival on the island and reaching the camp area, I approached a disorganized mass of people. I walked over to figure out how to check-in but was more focused on how I was going to cut through the crowd. I looked around and saw the entire Fyre team in full swing attempting to damage control. The full Fyre team on staff included Billy were standing on raised platforms attempting to answer questions, keep the masses calmed, and organize groups. I could see all hands were on deck. I approached Billy to greet him, and saw terror in his eyes as he seemed completely overwhelmed as if he underestimated the magnitude of the crowd and furthermore the festival. I asked if I could help and he could barely process what I could even help with and directed me to go into the main house where a girl friend of mine was since we got separated along the way. When inside the house it was truly all hands on deck. I recall Billy's cell phone almost dying so I plugged his phone in as he continued to control the masses. I was alerting him as pilots in Miami were awaiting confirmation to take off or cancel. It came to a point where Billy and the Fyre team canceled all remaining flights for the safety of the greater good. Not for a moment was Billy or his team in blissful ease.

While waiting it out that evening I overheard that there was plane leaving that same night, so I made it an effort to leave the island as soon as possible by getting on that flight. I remember sitting at the airport among others awaiting the flight plan and plane to arrive. As I sat there I overheard atrocious accusations by others that Billy wasn't even on the island, or that he was

elsewhere partying with models while the Fyre attendees were left in these conditions-- these are false statements as I saw first hand the stress and panic that Billy and his team were in. I address this point because the media and social media has no mercy, and can alter the truth for entertainment at any expense.

History has shown us us that taking risks leads to innovation, and innovation is how our great thought leaders in America are at their success point. Furthermore, it is critical to remember that failures precede to ultimate success-- that is how we learn best. Please consider the humanity of Billy.

Sincerely,  
Lauren Reilly

Philip Retif



To the Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

My name is Philip Retif. I am writing this letter in support of William McFarland ("Billy"). I am a Captain in the United States Marine Corps and an attorney, licensed in New Jersey and New York. I hope that the account of my experiences and personal observations of Billy from my ten years of friendship with him can help provide reasons for leniency at his sentencing.

I met Billy about ten years ago through the sport of Brazilian Jiu-jitsu. I had already been practicing for a year when he began his training. He was sixteen at the time; though his discipline in the way he trained, his analysis of the techniques and his dedication to the sport could have easily lead one to believe he was much older. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is a very demanding sport. It will push one to their limits, both physically and mentally. During the grueling workouts, a person's "true" amount of perseverance, grit and dedication are revealed. Billy was always above average in those three qualities. Billy and I trained together for years, three to four times a week. One quality that stuck with me about Billy is that he remained very humble, even when he became one of the more dominant students in the school.

As Billy's skills increased, Billy was often one of the few that volunteered his time to help the less experienced students in the class learn the proper techniques. For free. Billy's generous giving of his time is a behavior that I have often seen him exhibit throughout many areas of his life. I have also witnessed Billy do amazing acts of charity over the years, and I hope those acts of charity will be detailed in letters from the many recipient of his charitable ways.

As time went by, Billy headed to Bucknell University while I went to law school and then on to the Marine Corps. Saved for a couple Facebook messages here and there, we mostly lost touch during that time. However, I decided to reach out to him shortly after seeing his arrest in the New York Times because most of Billy's portrayals in the media were grossly inaccurate when compared to the Billy I remembered.

I have spent quite a bit of time with him since we re-established contact. In that time, he has expressed to me over and over how much he regretted what transpired. Billy has taken full responsibility for his acts. I have seen him engage in many discussions on how he can make things right and I know he has already taken significant steps towards that goal. He knows that his



approaching sentencing is likely to have serious consequences, yet his good nature and his willingness to help others have not diminished. To the contrary, in those last few months, while some would despair or try to escape the consequences, I have seen Billy do what I remember him do so often in the past: give his time, energy, and often money, into either helping others or creating productive projects. Often, he does this with little or no benefit to himself. Judge Buchwald, that is the true Billy, the Billy I knew. I am glad to see that he has not changed on that level. I know his generosity is real and genuine. One cannot fake that character trait over all those years.

Whether it is in sports, through sharing his vast knowledge of coding or through inviting others into his many inventive projects, I know Billy to be one of those few people that genuinely enjoy helping others. He's a creator in the purest sense. What's incredible is that he is only twenty-six, yet he has created so much already. I know that if given the chance, Billy has a lot more to give to society.

Out of the entire media coverage of the Fyre Festival, there is one picture in particular that stuck with me because it actually depicted Billy the way I remembered him. There is a picture of him standing on a table, surrounded by guests. I am told it was the second day. He is there, alone, with a bullhorn in his hands, trying to fix and better the situation while almost every vendor and many employees had already left and abandoned the guests. That's the Billy I knew from Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu: perseverance in the face of adversity, trying to fix the situation. Billy could have easily left like the others did. As a matter of fact, I know he was repeatedly told that he should leave due to the worsening conditions and likely dangers to his safety. Yet he stayed behind to try to right the proverbial ship.

I know that Billy plead guilty, and therefore he is not contesting the facts of the case. However, I sincerely hope that my letter helps Billy receive a lenient sentence. Billy has taken full responsibility for his acts. I know that if given the opportunity, Billy will be integral to making the aggrieved parties whole. I know that if given the chance, Billy will continue to be generous and to be a productive member of society. I am convinced that Billy has learned his lessons and will, in the future, create much good for society.

Please let me know if there is anything that I can do to help the Court make its decision.

Most respectfully,

*Philip Retif*

Philip Retif

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007  
Courtroom 21A

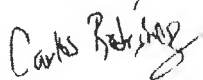
I, Carlos A. Rodríguez, am writing this letter on behalf of Billy McFarland to share some information about him. I know Billy for almost 4 years as he used to live at 345meatpacking where I currently work as a doorman/ concierge. I would like to express what I noticed about him while he was still living here.

To begin with, I used to see Billy pretty much everyday and, he always was a very respectful and kind individual with everyone. Similarly, all the guests he received at the building were very easygoing and educated people. I never witnessed any negative behavior from neither Billy nor any of his guests while I was on my shift during the day and/or evening. Moreover, he is very into sports. So, anytime it warmed up he and his friend, Chris, always went to a basketball court near the building to play a game.

In conclusion, Billy was an incredible tenant at 345meatpacking. Therefore, I strongly believe he truly deserves a second chance. My co-workers and I agree on this that Billy is a very knowledgeable person; he has so much potential to do great things in life that it would be a pity if his bright future would be cut off.

Thank you so much for your time and attention Your Honor.

Sincerely,



Carlos A. Rodriguez

March 26, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York  
c/o Randall W Jackson

Re: Billy McFarland

Dear Judge Buchwald:

My name is Peter Roe. I am a financial advisor with the Masters Private Client Group. Our clientele is mainly athletes, entertainers and entrepreneurs. I came to know Billy McFarland three years ago through my client base. Since our initial meeting I have had the good fortune to come to know him well both in business and personal settings.

My career in financial services started in 1992 with Key Brokerage (part of Key Bank) where I became licensed and eventually took a job as the assistant compliance officer. Later I moved to Raymond James Financial where I was an assistant compliance officer and later assistant national sales manager responsible for supervising over 1,000 financial advisors. In 1999 I moved into becoming a financial advisor.

Billy has consistently impressed me from our first meeting with his intelligence and work ethic coupled with an incredibly calm and compassionate demeanor. He possesses all the same tools I have witnessed in other highly successful individuals in their chosen professions. Although he has been notably humbled and contrite since the Fyre debacle, it has not diminished his desire to work and be productive. In fact, at our last meeting he expressed a desire to continue building successful businesses,

utilizing his recent experiences to ensure a better outcome, all for the purpose of being able to reimburse anyone that was harmed by the Fyre collapse. I believe that he is sincere in that desire.

Aside from his professional life I have found Billy to be a caring and devoted friend and family member. In social settings he was often the one that eschewed alcohol in order to return to work after a gathering or make an early morning work out session. That type of example was a good role model for both younger and older friends and co-workers. When it came time to establish his estate plan, we often discussed his family and how close he is to his parents and sister. His pride in their accomplishments and his love for them was readily apparent.

Throughout my career both as a compliance officer and financial advisor, I have perhaps more experience than most in witnessing first hand the devastating effects and warped personalities that are part of most financial crimes.

I was part of a US Attorney case in Texas that put a former financial advisor in prison for life. I would respectfully submit that having this experience hopefully gives some weight to my opinion that Billy McFarland deserves as much leniency as the court can possibly grant. I have no doubt that he is contrite, far more knowledgeable for having made his mistakes and ultimately driven to make amends for those mistakes. Given his character, intelligence and work ethic, he will surely be successful in doing so given a chance.


Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Roe', with a stylized, flowing script.

Peter Roe

HENRY L ROLLE JR

Black Point Exuma  
Bahamas  


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April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Hon. Naomi Reice Buchwald  
21<sup>st</sup> Floor of Daniel Patrick Moynihan Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street, New York, Ny  
Usa

Re: Character Reference for Billy McFarland

Your Honor,

I provide this reference in full acknowledgement of the charges against Mr. McFarland. I have had the pleasure of meeting Mr. McFarland on his many trips to Exuma, in The Bahamas almost 2 years ago. Mr. McFarland quickly took me under his wing as a mentor. Working alongside him quickly fuelled my existing dreams of becoming a business owner myself. My love for the waters and passion for people was what I believe drew us even closer from an employer/employee relationship to becoming "family".

I have been able to call on Mr. McFarland for assistance during and after his business endeavours in Exuma. While promoting the "Fyre Festival" I was working along with Mr. McFarland as a boat captain and tour guide. Mr. McFarland employed myself as well and others on the island that desperately needed assistance with providing for our families. His generosity and good business ethics and touched and have been implanted in my life as well as others. As a result I have even started by own business as a tour guide in Exuma (Jr Exuma Tours).

My life and business is forever indebted to Mr. McFarland and I am grateful for the opportunity to have met such a great influence on my life.

Sincerely,



Henry Rolle Jr



Judy buckwald

My name is Loan Rolle. I am one of the government leaders for the exuma island of black point in the Bahamas. In addition, my family owns, and I help run compass Cay, a very popular tourist destination, marina and resort north of black point in the exuma. I have held these positions for more than a decade in my position as a government official and tourism operator. I have seen and dealt with foreign tourists, event planners, tour companies and government of all sizes. With this experience I can confidently say that Billy is an impressive, sincere and overall a very good person, and getting to know him was made easier because of these traits. When he first arrived in our community what immediately stood out was how Billy treated locals like real people. Tourists don't not usually display this level of genuine kindness. But Billy did and took care of you. And became close friends with many of our friends and family. Everyone from the boat operators to the restaurant staff to the police to the government come and greet Billy everytime he comes to the exumas and we want to support him however we can for the rest of our lives. But beyond his kind nature Billy delivered value to our island. When he launched Fyre many of the local land owners asked him to host the festival on their island. When he eventually chose Great Exuma, he employed hundreds of Bahamians. The media attention in the US that shows angry Bahamians is very frustrating to me because there were hundreds who benefited from everything Billy did for them in the Bahamas. In addition, tourism numbers are up overall across the exumas this year. There is one other thing of worthy note. I remember seeing Billy late one night in Exuma. He was carrying a man home. Billy had ventured out by himself to pick up food from the food truck and the man, a Bahamian, had one leg and couldn't find a ride home. No one knows about this and Billy of course didn't tell anyone. This is one small act locals witnessed and it is acts like this that help define who Billy is as a person. Your honor; please as an official of the government of the Bahamas, consider my stories and recommendations that Billy is a good man that made real effort and had real passion for our community. Please for us all allow him to remain free to continue positively impacting others around him.

Loan Rolle

Stein Christian Saeboe III

Edgewater, NJ

May 7, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
Patrick Moynihan Federal Courthouse  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York 10007-1330

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am writing to you in the hopes that you will give Billy McFarland a second chance. I met Billy in May 2014. I didn't know it then, as I was a Sophomore emerging in my undergraduate studies, but he would turn out to be the person that presented to me the right perspective, at the right time, inspiring me to become what I believe to be the greatest asset to this even greater nation – the entrepreneur.

We have worked together on and off over the past 4 years. Not only have we conducted business together, but he has served as a mentor and my friend. He constantly supports innovative thinking and fights for value adds to society (specifically the New York metropolitan area) that better connect people and more importantly their ideas. He takes the risks most of us are unwilling to take with the hopes of achieving what most of us merely think of and never act on. Billy is an entrepreneur, innovator, and inspiration to those around him. Without him, I would not have had the spark to drive me to pursue my own ambitions.

I am a 23-year-old who just moved out of his parent's home with his girlfriend, will start working in the city full-time after I graduate May 10 this year, and am more generally in the middle of embarking on the next chapter of my life: building it. I am pursuing multiple businesses outside of my nine-to-five, continuing my education, and working my tail off at it all. Without Billy, I would not be nearly as motivated as I am to sculpt the life I so envision.

To Billy I say, "Thank you" and to Your Honor, thank you for taking the time to read what I have to say about Billy.

Cordially,

Stein Christian Saeboe III

Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St  
Room 2270  
New York, NY 10007  
April 3, 2018

Re: William McFarland

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I write to share my personal and business experience with William McFarland.

I am the CEO and Founder of Alley, a workspace and community for entrepreneurs. Since 2012 we have been working with thousands of entrepreneurs and early stage businesses.

William came to us in 2014 to find a workspace for his company, Magnises. For a few years he was a member of the community we curate here at Alley. In my experience he not only operated ethically, he also mentored other young entrepreneurs within our community and provided support. He always paid his membership fees on time, and we even collaborated on a few projects to benefit the community.

In my own entrepreneurial experience, growing a business can be extremely difficult and complex. We are often unprepared for decisions that we never thought we would have to make. I completely understand these decisions should only be between ethical and law-abiding options, but the context of the world of small businesses, it should not be lost in trying to understand what Bill was navigating. Although the environment we work in should not be viewed as an excuse, I believe we owe it to ourselves to also see the good in people from their perspectives and the perspectives of those they help. I not only saw the help he provided others, I saw first hand his generosity when he worked with me personally with some of my issues.

I am hopeful that you will recognize and appreciate the positive contributions Billy had made, as he has the ability to help many more people, to be a productive member of society and to make tangible social contributions in the future the way he done in our community during the time he was a participant.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jason Saltzman

Return address of the letter writer:

Jersey City, NJ

April 28th, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Judge Reice,

During the years 2013-2014 I was an employee of Mr. Billy McFarland at his former company, Spling, and worked closely with him.

As a newcomer to the city of New York, I was pretty much alone during my non-working hours. Billy always made sure to provide me company and went out of his way to ensure that I did not feel lonely, by inviting me to some functions and having me join his friends.

Moreover, whenever I felt that I needed to travel back home, Billy was always very understanding, even if it was "crunch time" for the company. He always valued and accommodated my needs, even if his business was impacted. I will always appreciate him for that.

In addition, Billy's kindness was not confined to the time I worked with him. A number of years after working with him, I was involved with a fundraiser for kids afflicted with Cancer ("Larger than Life"). When I asked Billy to help and donate to the cause, he didn't hesitate and sent in a donation right away. That is my view of and experience with Billy - always so generous and happy to help unconditionally.

Sincerely,

  
Yosef Shamesh.

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to you today to share a few of the many positive experiences I had these last few years with Mr. Billy McFarland.

I first met Billy when I was a sophomore in high school (2010) at a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu class. My friend and I were sophomores in high school, so we didn't have a driver's license and relied heavily on our parents to drive us to Brazilian Jitsu and often, our parents were too busy to drive us so we had to miss class frequently. However, when Billy, who lived in the same town as my friend and I but went to different high schools, learned about this, he, without hesitation, offered to drive us to class every day and drop us back home. He never once asked for anything in return even when we offered multiple times. He is the kind of person who didn't mind helping others out.

Fast forward, a few years to the summer of 2013. I was just finished my freshman year in college and Billy was starting a brand-new startup called Sping. I was looking for an Internship during the summer and since we kept in touch in the years between, I reached out to Billy to see if he needed any help. Like always, Billy helped set something up for me without thinking twice. During that summer, I was able to learn a lot from Billy. Being young and having the responsibility of running a company, he handled himself with the utmost professionalism and Integrity. I looked up to Billy as a role model after that. In fact, it was my experiences working with Billy that summer that allowed me to discover that I wanted to go into business.

When I first interviewed at the job I am today, the first words my interviewer (who ended up being my manager) said to me after reading my resume was, "Do you know Billy McFarland?"

It is safe to say that without Billy, I would not be where I am today.

Thank you for your time!

Best,

Marco



To the Honorable Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald;

Your Honor,

My name is Hakim Sourzes and I am sending this letter to support William McFarland ("Billy"). I hope that me writing this letter shows that Billy is a good person, deserving of leniency.

I met Billy completely by chance. About five years ago, I was working as an Uber driver when by pure fate, Billy was one of the fares I picked up that day. It's hard to describe the feeling in words, but we connected immediately. Even though he had to go to his appointment, we ended up talking for over an hour about my current situation. At that time, I was facing bankruptcy, and looking for more steady income in order to stave it off. When I told him about that, Billy immediately proposed that I drive him around, full time. I accepted. This job helped me beyond measures at that time. Even though I did not have much to offer him that was different than other drivers around the city, he decided to invest in me. Money, yes, but more importantly time. He would constantly ask me how was my family, what were they doing... When he could, he would even take time out of his day to provide advice to them.

What is incredible about Billy is that not only would he pay me even on the days I did not drive him, but he also financed the car I was using. We kept building our relationship, and after a while, he decided to hire me for his Magnises venture. This was Billy's second investment in me.

Around September 2015, I was diagnosed with a blood disorder. My prognostic was grim. In fact, I was given less than ninety percent chance to survive. My medical condition affected me on many levels. It messed with my memory. It sometimes left me unable to speak. Even more importantly to me, it created tension with my family for reasons that I won't write here... but the end result was that my family and most of my friends abandoned and cut me off. Not Billy. Billy never left me. He made regular visits to the hospital. He paid my rent, my food and some of my medical costs. In a very real sense, he saved my life.

Just thinking of what he did for me and my children all these years and what that means to me and my family is hard. Truthfully, I am emotional just thinking about it as I am typing right now. I asked Billy if I could come to court and explain to everyone what he did for me. If given the opportunity I will. Even though there is no way that I can properly explain it in words, Billy

means the world to me. Billy saved me on many levels. And this is why I am asking for leniency for Billy.

I was sick during the Fyre Festival events and was not around. I don't know what happened exactly. Had I been there, I would have done everything I could to help him. But what I do know is that Billy is a good person. I am not the only person that he has invested so much into, for almost no reason. I saw him do that with other people. Often. It's incredible. I know that if given the opportunity, he has so much more to offer. So much good to do. And he will. I know he will, and this is why I know he deserves as much leniency as possible.

Your honor, if there is anything I can do to help Billy out, anything you need to help make your decision, please let me know. I can come in anytime. I can speak on the phone anytime. I can come to court. If anyone ever deserved leniency, it is Billy.

Sincerely,

/S/ Hakim Sourzes

[REDACTED]  
New York City, NY  
[REDACTED]

Dear Judge Buchwald,

I am writing to urge leniency in the sentencing of my good friend Billy McFarland. I've known Billy McFarland for quite some time now and it's extremely hard to wrap my head around the thought of Billy McFarland going to prison. He's a brilliant young man that has the capability of making a huge difference in the world. Billy McFarland has always been a great friend to me, willing to extend his helping hand at any given moment in time without thinking twice. I humbly ask your Honor to please give Billy McFarland a second chance at life to show he can definitely be a productive member of society. I have faith that the right course of action will be considered by the judicial system. Thank you for your time and consideration in this request for leniency for my friend Billy McFarland.

Yves St. Vil

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, New York

Dear Honorable Judge Buchwald,

My name is Thomas Steele, I'm a retired New York City Police Officer shield 22805,

I retired in 1997 due to an injury, I worked over 14 years as a proud member of the finest police department in the world,

Police Commissioner James O'Neil, and myself were in the same class together in 1983,

we lived together for 3 years during and after we graduated from the police academy.

We both ended up in the Bronx before the merger of all 3 different departments,

Commissioner O'Neil worked for the New York City Transit Police, myself NYPD in the 44 precinct.

We started our police careers together, as you know he still fighting crime leading the fine men and woman of the greatest police force in the world.

I had the opportunity to work for Mr. William McFarland as his company driver.

My day usually started going to the garage to get the vehicle, than driving to pick up Billy,

I felt close enough to this young man that it was always comfortable for me to address him as Billy, and he was fine with it.

Early on in my employment working for Billy, I heard and felt the excitement in Billy's voice putting together the Fyre Festival.

I was amazed at his leadership skills for such a young man, being able to put together an organization, directing his staff, taking important meetings,

communicating with high end talent in the music industry as well as influencers in the modeling world.

No time in the 6 months that I drove Billy McFarland did I feel like he was doing all these crazy long hours of work days & nights to turn the Fyre Festival into the disaster that it was.

We talked a lot about the Festival, how hard it was to put all this together on an island so far away, the

island logistics were not ready to hold such a major venue

Unfortunately now we all know the outcome, a storm hit the island the night before the guests were to arrive,

making the decision to go thru with the Festival after the storm hit was a costly mistake, guests arrived to a complete disaster,

the accommodations of housing, food, transportation and the musical performers were in disarray, Bill never planned for the what if's.

In my gut, as a retired police officer, I never felt like this young man was planning to do anything that could jeopardize his reputation nor his freedom.

Billy is the type of young man who interacts with people to believe in his dreams, as you listen to Billy's excitement in organizing the Festival.

This young man talents are not in organization logistics, he was not an organized leader, that doesn't mean he's not capable of leading,

he's just was not a good planer, and when the storm hit on the island, he didn't have the proper answers from a playbook, because of his organization skills.


I've arrested and been around the worst defendants society can dish out, at no time working for this young man did I ever get from my sixth sense

that he would jeopardize his reputation, his family, and freedom for financial gain.

Any consideration of my views on Mr. MacFarland would greatly be appreciated by me, as you decide the next chapter in this young man's life.

Thank you for reading my endorsement of Bill, I would worked for Bill again if the opportunity occurred.

Thomas Steele  
Retired NYPD



Honorable Judge:

I am writing in support of Billy McFarland. I remember distinctly the first time I met Billy McFarland in July of 2014 at a Magnises social hour event. It was the very first Magnises event I attended as I just had my membership approved that week. I was delighted and surprised to meet the founder so quickly. Billy was very actively involved with Magnises and its members and made it a point to personally meet everyone, an impressive feat given that Magnises by that time already had 1000s of members and was in reputable publications like Forbes and WSJ through which I discovered it.

What immediately struck me about Billy was his keen, genuine interest in business and people. Billy's passion in life is in creating new opportunities for young people through a combination of innovativo technology and highly connected personal networking.

We shared these interests and became friends. Over the past few years I've gotten to know Billy well.

Billy cares about people. He wants to enable others around him to live through more interesting experiences, and to connect. This is what Magnises was about, and it was what the festival and the technology platform was about as well. It's always about people, connections and enabling opportunities. This is Billy at his core. Billy values human capital over profit margins and money. This is a unique, refreshing and wonderful trait in the world's financial center.

It does not make sense for a person so pronounced on building a network whose biggest asset is human capital to throw it all away and destroy the network. Billy employed 100s of employees. He made risky sweeping investments in infrastructure, marketing and technology and payroll. Billy is an entrepreneur.

Thank you kindly for taking the time to read this letter and consider my experience.

Sincerely,

Tomas Vykruta  
Google Staff Engineer, Commercial Pilot

*T. Vykruta*





To whom it may concern,

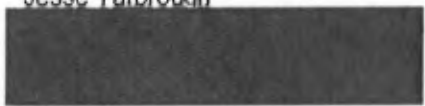
The purpose of this letter is to document the positive impact that Billy McFarland had on our school community during the 2015-2016 school year.

Specifically, in the Spring of 2016, Mr. McFarland initiated, organized, and facilitated a free Computer-Programming & Entrepreneurship Program for a group of 5th graders at PS 536, a Title I school in the Parkchester neighborhood of the Bronx. As part of the program, Mr. McFarland and his team planned and executed weekly lessons on computer coding and business development for our students. Billy McFarland encourage students to develop a website based on something that they were passionate about, and taught them skills they would need to develop a business plan. In addition, Mr. McFarland provided laptops (Apple MacBooks) for all participating students, organized guest speakers from the entertainment industry, and hosted a culminating event at a restaurant in Manhattan. Our 5th grade students described this experience as the most memorable time of their six years spent at PS 536.

Mr. McFarland is gracious, kind, and selfless. It was an honor to work with him and his team. The PS 536 team will forever be grateful to Mr. McFarland for his generosity.

Sincerely,

Jesse Yarbrough



Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY

Your Honor,

I want to start out by giving you some background on my perspective on Billy, so that hopefully, you can better understand my relationship with him. He and I dated for the better part of 4 years. I first met Billy while working with him at Magnises. From the instant I interviewed with him, his charisma, enthusiasm, and energy drew me in. My job at Magnises was probably the greatest experience, career-wise, I have ever had.

From my perspective, he has always been the hardest working and most determined person I've ever known. Although we are no longer together, I can truly say that he is one of the most unique people I've ever met in my life. I've never been so motivated by someone, let alone a boyfriend, in my entire life. He not only pushed me in my career, but in my personal life as well, to be the best possible person I could be. I had the opportunity to know him professionally, emotionally, and in a way that few others I think could say.

My favorite story about Billy has to do with a homeless man that lived near his old apartment. For as long as I've known Billy and walked the streets of Manhattan with him, he gives almost every homeless person he passes some money—sometimes a dollar or two, or sometimes a little more to help them out. Sometimes he'll even bring them water or a snack from Strawberry Deli across from his apartment. The particular homeless man I am talking about is named "voice" - his voice is high-pitched, unlike anything I've ever heard and he likes to sing. Billy saw him often and would always give him a few dollars when passing by. Eventually, Billy went to see voice one day and told him that if he could get a job and prove that he had one by bringing him his first paycheck, he would double it. He wanted to help voice get back on his feet, help him get an apartment, and help him get his life back on track. Sure enough, voice sought out Billy when he was out and about near his apartment one day and presented him the paycheck. Billy, always one to keep his promises, did as he said he would and gave Voice the same amount of money he had received from his first paycheck. This happened every few weeks, and eventually voice was able to rent his first apartment with the encouragement and help from Billy. We haven't seen him around for awhile, so we like to think that he's remained off the streets and has gotten his life back on track. This is just one of many examples that truly shows Billy's kind heart and generosity. He is always willing to help someone in need and if he knows that he can make a difference in someone's life, whether it's a homeless person, an employee, a colleague, a friend, he will often go to great lengths to do what he can for them.

One of Billy's old friends from his jiu-jitsu days posted a status on Facebook about how he had risked everything to open up his own gym but seemed to be struggling a bit to make ends meet. Wanting to see how he could help out, Billy did some research on the new facility he had opened. Since he wasn't able to actually go to the gym and train there due to his shoulder injury, he found out how much his friend paid in rent for the space and offered to cover it for him for a year. Beyond grateful, his friend was nearly in tears on the phone thanking him and telling him he had no idea how much he was helping him out. Watching

him make his old friends day, smiling ear to ear as he often does, and possibly even changing this man's life was amazing to see. Billy always finds a way to encourage the people in his life and give them a sense of confidence that I haven't seen many people able to do.

Billy always finds a way to encourage the people in his life and give them a sense of confidence. He often knows exactly what to say to make someone's day better, or give them a boost of encouragement when they really need it. His charismatic personality brings a smile to nearly everyone he meets, and he has a way of making you feel special. While working at Magnises, the bond between our team was stronger than any other team I've worked on, and I think it really helped us come together to work harder, and at the center of that was Billy bringing us all together.

His passion for everything he does is inspiring. The amount of things he taught me, encouraged me to do to better myself, and was there for me as a friend and as a boyfriend are endless. His generosity is unlike anything I have experienced in someone (let alone a guy) at the age of 25. I believe he has a deep understanding for what other people need and is willing to go above and beyond to help anyone and everyone achieve greatness. I understand that the choices he made while trying to put on the Fyre Festival were not good. However, after becoming so close to him over the last couple of years, and especially the months after the festival, I can truthfully say that I believe he didn't intentionally bring harm to anyone.

The Billy that I know spends hours with me showing me how to improve my design skills, he takes me "surf kayaking" at his family's beach house even though I'm afraid of the big waves (I only fell off the kayak once). He spent an afternoon teaching me how to catch crabs with little chicken bits on the end of a piece of string. The Billy I know brings me home to his amazing mother, father, and sister, that love him so dearly. He made me feel loved and safe when I need it most. The Billy I know spends time with me and the people he cares about, and will do anything for. We spent an afternoon throwing snowballs at each other through his apartment window during a blizzard and laughing harder than I have laughed in a long time. He cares and makes everyone, especially me, feel special. He taught me everything I know about football and now I can confidently say I'm a Jets fan (even though I know they're terrible).

Billy is a good person. He is unbelievably determined, and I can confidently say that he will do whatever it takes to redeem himself after what happened. I sincerely ask you from the bottom of my heart, to please have leniency on him. He doesn't deserve prison. He is someone that will do more good in the world out of prison than he would inside. As someone 2 years his senior (I know, not that much), he is young at heart and made a horrible mistake. But it isn't a mistake that I think merits time behind bars. I know that given the chance, he will work harder than he ever has (which is really hard) to right his wrongs and do his best to repair the damage.

He has changed my life in so many ways, and imagining his life being cut short or put on hold because of a bad decision he made as a young and reckless boy feels like a horrible nightmare.

Billy will always have a place in my heart because of how much he taught me, how caring I know he can be, and how determined he is in all aspects of his life. I believe everyone deserves a second chance, and in this instance, I am pleading that you show him some forgiveness and give him the opportunity to right his wrongs. I know that he can and will. I know his capabilities as a person, and despite the decisions he's made, I know he would never intentionally cause the pain and dismay that's come from those decisions. He is the most resilient person I know.

I know this letter is probably one of many, but I hope you can take everything I say into consideration and know that if I didn't feel a deep love and care for Billy, and true confidence in his character, I wouldn't be writing this.

He means so much to me, and to his family and friends, I only wish the best for him at this extremely difficult time.

Thank you for your consideration, your Honor.

Very best,  
Allie Zachar

April 23, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl Street  
New York, NY

Judge Buchwald:

We are writing to you ahead of the sentencing for Billy McFarland on June 21, 2018.

We have known Billy for several years through our daughter Alexandra – who has been a close friend of his since 2014.

Based on our interactions, we'd ask you to consider leniency for Billy. While we knew him in a social context and do not have perspective on his business arrangements, we can say that he was very good to our daughter and was very very respectful / polite / genuine on the handful of occasions where we all spent time together. We have three adult daughters and therefore have plenty of experience with "the boyfriends" and can state confidently that he is a very decent guy personally.

Based on our interactions with Billy, we think he will learn from his significant mistakes. We believe he has the capacity to course-correct his life and become an honorable and contributing member of society.

We very much appreciate the Court's consideration of this letter.

With all good wishes,

Ned and Janet Zachar

April 30, 2018

Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald  
500 Pearl St., Courtroom 21A  
New York, NY 10012

Dear Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald,

I am writing you today in the hopes of conveying to you the type of person Billy McFarland is, someone I have considered one of my closest friends since I met him nearly 12 years ago. Billy and I met at preseason football practice in August of our freshman year at The Pingry School where he had just joined as a new student. Even then, it was hard to put a finger on what made Billy stand out to me and my friends - he wasn't the flashiest, or the most talkative, or the type to try to force himself into the group and be well-liked. He just had a sense of quiet drive and sincerity about him that even a group of kids as young as we were could appreciate.

As I have come to learn, despite how impressive his accomplishments have been throughout the years, he never cared about being the center of attention. He has always been focused on what he could do for others without seeking any sort of credit or recompense. He has been steadfast in maintaining unrivaled loyalty to those of us who are lucky enough to call him our friend, no matter what is going on in his personal or professional life.

The past few months have obviously been difficult for Billy, but he's never been one to make excuses, and certainly never been one to let his friends feel the burden of his mistakes. Honestly, it's what has made the past year very difficult - I feel like I haven't been able to be there for Billy in all of the ways he's been there for me in the past. Instead, just a few weeks ago, it was Billy coming to my rescue yet again.

We were out celebrating my birthday with some friends, and being the lackadaisical planner that I am, I hadn't thought of where we would all go to eat dinner. Everyone was trying to make plans, but we were all being pulled in different directions and the night was quickly unraveling. Billy, knowing that I would want to keep everyone together, sprung into action. Before I knew it, we were on our way to dinner with all of our friends (a seemingly impossible feat on a Saturday night in New York City). This is quintessential Billy - taking action and solving problems without needing to be asked. And more importantly, bringing people together and making them feel loved.

Billy never does these quiet acts of kindness to prove anything to us, or to get any sort of recognition. He just wants to see that his friends are happy and to be there to share the moment with us. I hope you find that Billy is the kind of person all of us know him to be, so that we can all be fortunate enough to share more of these moments with him again soon. Billy's heart has always been in the right place and his drive is so strong that I know he will do amazing things if given the chance to point it in the right direction.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tyler Zoidis



New York, NY